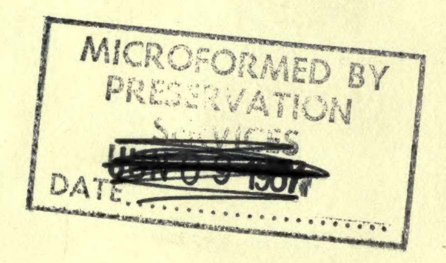
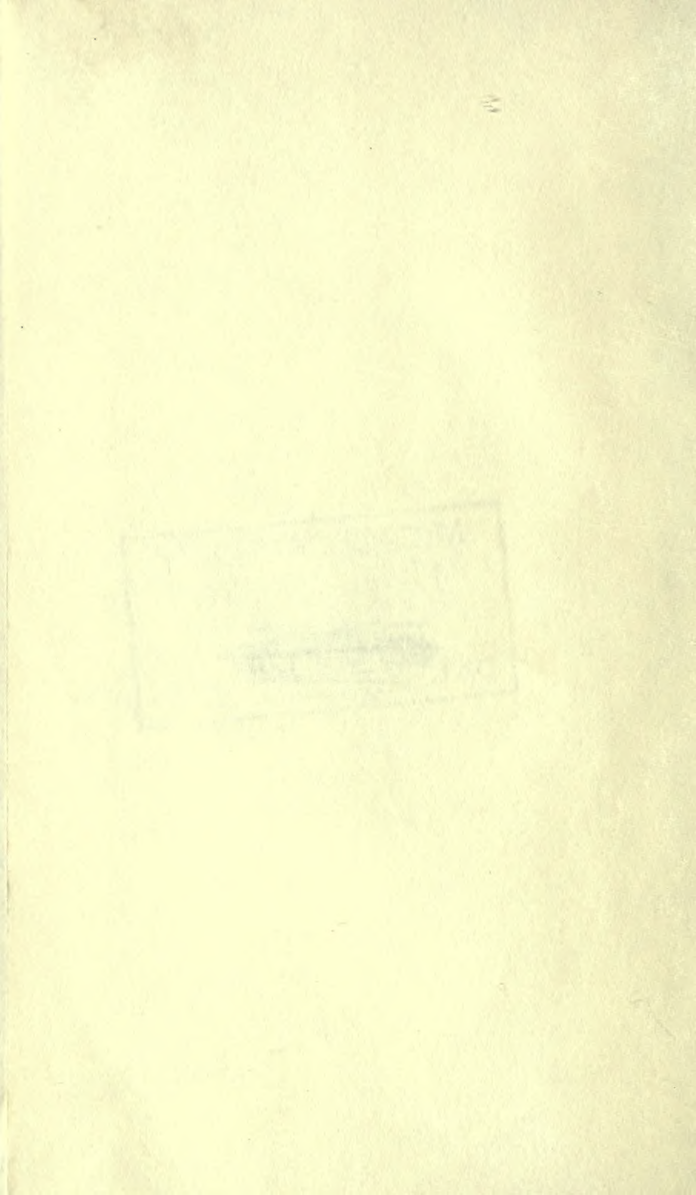
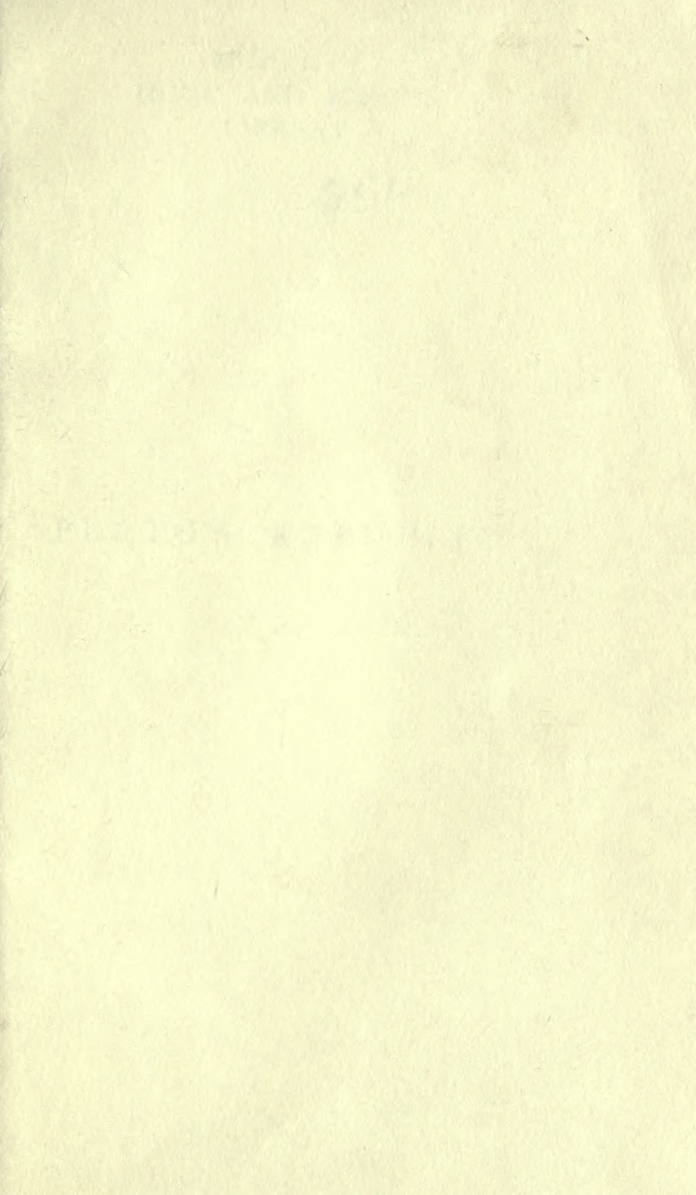

3 1761 05264619 7





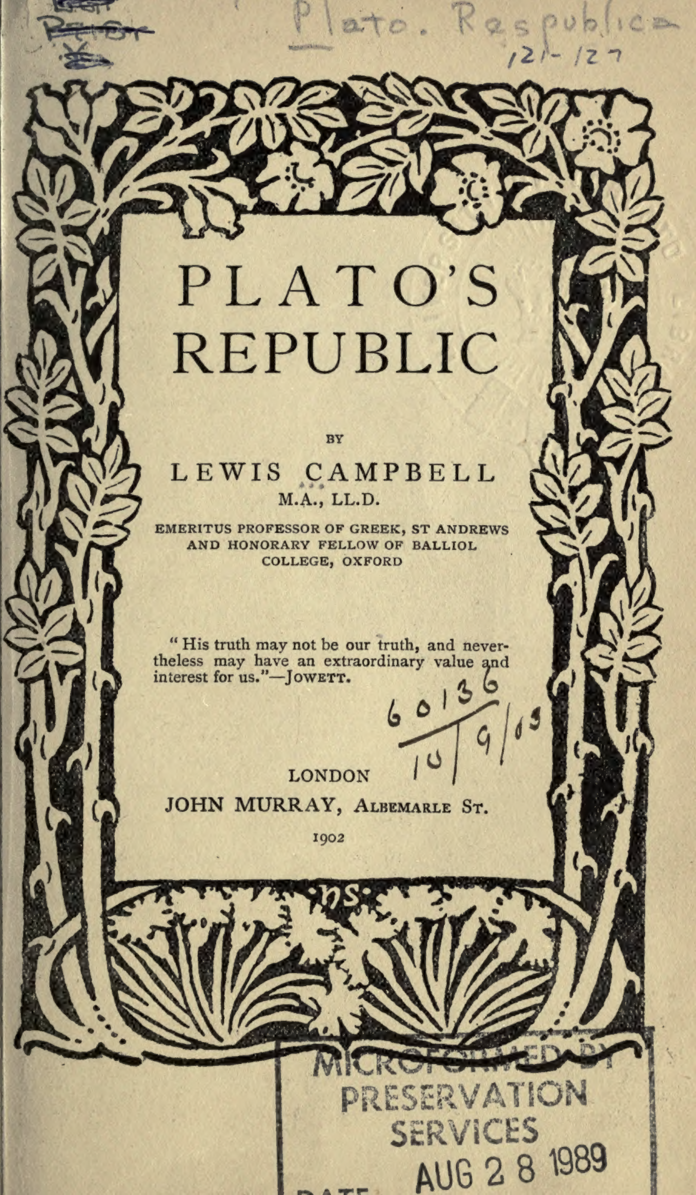




MURRAY'S
HOME AND SCHOOL
LIBRARY

PLATO'S REPUBLIC





PLATO'S REPUBLIC

BY

LEWIS CAMPBELL
M.A., LL.D.
EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF GREEK, ST ANDREWS
AND HONORARY FELLOW OF BALLIOL
COLLEGE, OXFORD

"His truth may not be our truth, and nevertheless may have an extraordinary value and interest for us."—JOWETT.

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE ST.
1902

PREFACE

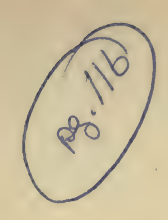
WHEN asked by Mr Magnus, the editor of this series, to write a little book on Plato's *Republic*, I was not disinclined from the task, but feared that the ground was already too much occupied. Not only Professor Jowett's monumental work, which may be beyond the reach of some readers, but Davies and Vaughan's translation, Mr Bosanquet's notes, the manual of the Dean of Christchurch, and the late R. L. Nettleship's able essay in Hellenica, seemed to supply all that was needed, whether for the student or the general reader. But I could not set my opinion against my publisher's, and I was encouraged to hope that I might still be able to say something worth printing on a subject which has been more or less familiar to me for fifty years.

Since the greater part of the present volume was written, Mr Nettleship's lectures on the *Republic* have been posthumously issued. I was glad to find in them many of my own thoughts anticipated, and to recognise much else as valuable and striking. But as these lectures were delivered to classical students in the University of Oxford, their aim is in some ways different from that to which this smaller work has been directed.

My special thanks are due to Professor Gomperz of Vienna for his courtesy in sending me some advanced sheets of the second volume of his great book on the *Greek Thinkers*, now in course of publication. In referring to this volume, of which the translation is not yet published, I give the paging of the German edition. The references to Dr Gomperz's first volume follow the paging of the English version by Mr Laurie Magnus (John Murray). In quoting Plato I give the pages of the edition of Stephanus, as they appear on the margins of Jowett's translation (3rd edition), which I have for the most part followed in quoting Plato. The letters A, B, C, D, E, represent the sections of each page as they are marked in most editions of the Greek text. The quotations from Jowett's Introductions are from the 3rd edition, 1892. I have further to acknowledge the kindness of the authorities in the British Museum in allowing the use of several of the illustrations, to refer to Blümner's *Technologie* for the picture of the spindle, and to offer my best thanks to Mr Hallam Murray, and to my friends Mr and Mrs Bernard Jenkin, for their assistance in preparing the illustrations to Chapter X.

LEWIS CAMPBELL.

S. ANDREA, ALASSIO, ITALY,
March 1902.



CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATO'S REPUBLIC

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY.—COMPOSITION OF THE "REPUBLIC."—STYLE OF PLATO

Introductory.—Twice during a literary career of half a century, Plato addressed his thoughts to a wider public than the literary circle or the philosophical school. In the meridian of his life he produced the *Republic*, and, in old age, after a period of changeful activity, he indited what has come down to us in the twelve books of the *Laws*. In the interim, through much effort and disillusionment, his thoughts had widened to embrace the whole Hellenic world; whereas in the *Republic* the horizon is still Athenian; although the environing cloud-land is illumined with cross-lights from a glorified Sparta, and from the wisdom of the greater Hellas in the distant west.

The scene is in the house of Cephalus, the

Syracusan sojourner at the Piræus, whose sons are citizens of Athens. The chief interlocutors, besides Socrates, are Glaucon and Adeimantus, brothers of Plato.

The persons who sustain a Platonic Dialogue are seldom without significance. In the *Phædo*, for example, the principal respondents are Cebes the critical, and Simmias, the untiring promoter of discourse (*Phædrus*, 242B), who had both known Philolaus the Pythagorean when he visited Thebes. Phædo, the narrator, is a beloved disciple of the Master. The inference is plain; the *Phædo* was intended for an inner circle; it raises questions which could only be discussed amongst philosophers, and which are closely related to Pythagorean doctrine. But Polemarchus, the son of Cephalus, who appears at the opening of the Republic, though he had a tincture of philosophy (*Phædrus*, 257B) was mainly a politician; he was one of the victims of the Thirty Tyrants. And the brothers of Plato, while like many other youths they are attached to Socrates, are living in the fashionable world, and their ears are open to the discordant voices that were confusing the intellects of the time. Glaucon, the younger and more eager, although his mind is nimbly alert, is repeatedly rallied by Socrates as a man of pleasure, who keeps quails and hounds; and Adeimantus

is clearly a man of the world who has an eye to the practical bearing of philosophical speculation. His staid and sober intellect stands in contrast to the impetuosity of Glaucon. When enquiry becomes difficult, Socrates says, "My dear Glaucon, you would not be able to follow me; I will tell you my meaning in a figure." And the remarks of Adeimantus, though often to the point, are characterized rather by good sense than by speculative ability. The brothers part between them the elements of the philosophic nature, quickness and stability. Both young men are familiar with the outline of Socratic enquiry; but require to be reminded from time to time of things which they have often heard. "That theme is of a higher mood than belongs to our present enterprise," says Socrates, when approaching a speculative ascent. All this is in keeping with the purpose of a writing which appeals not to a few disciples, but to the cultivated Athenian public.

Plato, like Shakespeare, is for all time; yet to understand him rightly he must be studied in relation to his age. That is a task which now for many years has been industriously pursued. The danger is that in this, as in other well-known cases, the surrounding conditions may tend to supersede the central reality:—that in analysing the vehicle, the essence may escape, leaving, as has well been

said, the "tea leaves without the aroma." My object in the following pages will therefore be twofold: partly to explain some aspects of the dialogue, in which elucidation seems to be required, at least for beginners; but partly also to indicate some ways in which the spirit of the author of the *Republic*, when duly "unsphered," may without violence be fruitfully applied to modern life, notwithstanding the extreme difference both of real and imaginary circumstances. For I believe that without rudely breaking with our own past, or with the laws which govern modern life, we may yet win valuable suggestions from this ancient writing. As Professor Jowett long since observed, "Plato's truth may not be our truth, and nevertheless may have an extraordinary value and interest for us."

It has been repeatedly said that the Sermon on the Mount cannot be directly applied to the moral needs of industrial societies. Some, like Count Tolstoi, would elude the difficulty by defying modern social arrangements. Others turn aside from a religion which appears to them to hold forth a chimerical ideal. But it is generally agreed, even by those who refrain from attempting the impossible, that the meaning and influence of these Divine counsels of perfection are inexhaustible. So in a lower yet important sense, it may prove to be with regard to Plato. When the dust is blown off

the old volume the first impression may be one of strangeness and remoteness from ourselves. Yet as we become really familiar with this great writer of another age, he may be more useful to us than when he was the mere shadow of a name, a symbol for some general notion of idealism or some modern theory of innate ideas. When understood with all his variety of experience and feeling, Plato is a less simple phenomenon, but more rich in lasting significance.

Composition of the "Republic."—I. The unity of the *Republic* as a literary masterpiece is incontestable. The several parts of the work are balanced and proportioned as in a five-act play. After a noble introduction the interest rises, culminates, deepens, and is rounded off, as in a tragedy.

1. The subject is started in what Socrates himself calls the proem or prelude (Book I., pp. 327-354).

2. Unexpected complications arise with the objections of Glaucon and Adeimantus. The foundations of the commonwealth are laid: educational principles are established, the Virtues are defined, and Justice, the original object of search, appears to be discovered both in the state and in the individual (Books II.-IV., pp. 357-479).

3. But a great surprise is in reserve. Socrates develops his three great paradoxes: the equality

of the sexes, the principle of Communism, and the supremacy of the philosopher. "We must educate our masters." And hence the Dialogue proceeds to the discussion of philosophical first principles and the evolution of the higher education (Books V.-VII., pp. 449-551). Here the interest has reached its height.

4. We descend from the contemplation of the "idea of good" to view the actual world as in a course of gradual declension from Platonic Aristocracy (the supremacy of the Best), through Timocracy (the supremacy of the Illustrious), Oligarchy (the reign of the Few), and Democracy (the supremacy of the People), to Tyranny (one-man rule), the last and worst of evils. And by means of analogies which are partly fanciful the aberrations of individual character are also described.

The tyranny of passion is contrasted with the sovereignty of reason (Books VIII.-IX., pp. 543-592).

5. With a return to the ideal state, various threads of the preceding argument are drawn together. The unreality of emotional art is finally discarded, the rewards of virtue are enforced, and the whole concludes with the assertion of immortality, and a vision of judgment.

The awakening of Er upon the funeral pyre

rounds off the fable, and restores the reader to the light of common day (Book X.).

II. But some recent critics who have examined the *Republic* as a philosophical treatise have observed certain incoherences from which they infer that the different parts of the Dialogue were composed at several times, and belong to different stages in Plato's career.

1. The connexion of Books II.-IV. with Book I., and still more that of Books V.-VII. with what precedes and follows them, is slight and accidental; and considering the importance and extent of this third portion it is remarkable that Books VIII.-IX. should seem to be written in direct continuation of Book IV.

2. There are apparent inconsistences or fluctuations in the philosophical point of view, especially in the manner of conceiving the ideas. The metaphysics and psychology of Books I.-IV. are but slightly in advance of the earlier Dialogues, betraying no anticipation of the heights to which ideal speculation rises in Book VI.: and again, in the concluding portion, the mind seems to have fallen back on cruder theories, and poetic fancies. Hence it has been inferred that Books V.-VII. were an after-thought, perhaps added in a second edition, or at least greatly expanded when the first issue of the work had been subject to criticism.

We know little of the conditions under which such a book as the *Republic* would be produced in the fourth century B.C. Perhaps, as Zeno's thesis is described in the *Parmenides* Dialogue, it would be read more than once to a select audience, and afterwards revised and altered by the author himself before it took its final shape and was copied and distributed. It may have been thus shown privately to persons of reputation, and modified in consequence of their remarks, much as the *Parmenides* is supposed by some to have been due to the strictures of the youthful Aristotle. The process which has been imagined by certain German critics is therefore not inconceivable. But neither of the reasons which have been repeated above has really any cogency.

First, as to the connexion: Such seemingly accidental transitions as are here objected to, are in accordance with Plato's manner elsewhere. They are the result not of caprice, but of profound contrivance, and give to the Dialogue an air of verisimilitude. The conduct of the argument in the *Symposium*, *Phædo*, and *Phædrus*, presents features of very close similarity. And secondly, the dialectical discrepancies are not greater than may be found in other Dialogues of narrower compass. What can be more diverse, for example, than the three several proofs of immortality in

the *Phædo?* What apparent incongruity in the *Phædrus* between the supra-mundane vision and the method of classification, or in the *Politicus* between the cosmic myth and the scientific definition of the Statesman! The comparison of the *Phædo*, where the objections of Simmias and Cebes to the first argument lead on to the next, is peculiarly instructive.

When Plato is pursuing one line of thought or argument, all others seem to be excluded for the time. He is in the habit of reserving his main secret until the opportune moment for disclosing it has arrived, and from summits of speculation which have been painfully won, he will sometimes descend, as in Book X. of the *Republic*, to popular statements of a less esoteric kind.

The disintegrating hypothesis really proves too much, for not only the whole work, but the several portions may in like manner be dismembered. And no one can be so simple as to imagine that, in beginning the second book, Plato had not the construction of the state prepared in his mind, or that in drawing the picture of paradisaical simplicity he had not already thought of the warrior class. At that point, as Gomperz has observed, the three main topics which form the *Republic*—Morality, Political Speculation, and Idealism—are woven together with consummate

art. The author is playing with his audience, and carries them whither he will.

The hypercritical line of argument here referred to may, however, be not unprofitable if it leads us to examine closely the steps by which the argument advances from point to point, sometimes by leaps and bounds, and sometimes gradually. We should then learn more of the combination of speculative audacity with artistic reserve which is characteristic of this great writer; and be less often tempted to look for exact logical coherence between statements which are clothed in figures of speech.

Inferences to the same disintegrating effect have been drawn from the style of Book I., which has been thought to recall the manner of the earliest Dialogues. The liveliness of the dramatic portraiture, as in the *Protagoras*, and the relentless handling of Thrasymachus, as of Polus in the *Gorgias*, are supposed to be notes of youthfulness. But no early Dialogue, unless the *Crito* is early, contains such a mellow picture of unphilosophic virtue as the interior of the house of Cephalus, and the question, "Can the just man injure even an enemy?" shows a corresponding advance in moral reflection. While beneath the mask of irony, which Socrates assumes in dealing with Thrasymachus, there are veiled anticipations even of the crowning paradox that the philosopher is

the only real ruler, and that he only rules because he is compelled to do so by the fear of being governed by the sham politicians of the age. It is also observed that the remark of Socrates about the unsatisfactory conclusion resembles the end of the *Protagoras*. But the discrepancy between the two positions, that justice makes for happiness and that the true ruler governs not for his own benefit but for that of the governed, is precisely calculated to lead the way for the enquiry as it is conducted in the following portions of the work.

The conception of Schleiermacher, that Plato's Dialogues taken as a whole were intended to evolve in the mind of the reader by gradual steps a system that was already full grown and complete in the writer's mind, may with more reason be applied to the *Republic*, where the Platonic Socrates leads his hearers onwards from a simple beginning to the matured results of strenuous thought.

On the Style of Plato—Fragmentary Notes by the late Professor Jowett.—1. The form is that of the very best conversation. It has all the easy grace, the freedom of saying anything, the perfect urbanity and courtesy of the most polished manners. You feel that you are in first-rate company, of which Socrates is the

Master. It is also eloquent conversation, in which great subjects are put forward in the noblest language. And the conversation sometimes passes into speeches of considerable length, as in the *Symposium* and *Phædrus*.

2. It is a drama, in which there are persons, but no action, and only conversation; and there are situations such as the preparation for the great text, "when kings are philosophers or philosophers kings," and the re-action afterwards. The dialogue has in fact a certain relation to the drama; it could not have existed but for the development of the drama in the previous century. And after the decay of the drama, the dialogue also decayed. There is no proof that dialogues were written before Plato, though they are attributed to Zeno, perhaps by Plato himself, at the beginning of the *Parmenides*. They are also attributed to Xenophon and Aristotle:—of the genuineness of the last doubts may be entertained. The dialogue was created by Plato and continued by his imitators,—an imitation which was adopted by the Romans, and by modern writers; but no department of literature has been less successful. This might be illustrated from Cicero and Berkeley.

3. The perfected form of the dialogue, though not always adopted by Plato, is the recitation of a conversation. This gives the opportunity of

description, as in a modern novel. The dialogue thus resembles a romance as well as a drama, and a double interest is thus created. A short prologue is sometimes added, containing the occasion of the dialogue, as in the *Republic*, *Phædo*, and *Symposium*—in which we are told about the *dramatis personæ*. The narrator may be an insignificant person, or may be Socrates himself, as in the *Republic*. When the object has once been gained, the prologue is soon laid aside.

4. But the conversation, the drama, the novel or narrative, pass into a fourth character—that of an argument; the thinking out of a subject from various points of view, by the intercourse of different persons. Dialectic is described as the mind talking. That is also the description of the dialogue. It is the mind arguing aloud, illustrating the saying that there is something to be urged on both sides of a question, seeking to define popular or ambiguous terms, and often arriving at no conclusion. These were dialogues of search, as they were called by Thrasyllus and the ancients. The principal speaker in them is generally Socrates, but sometimes the first place is reserved to Protagoras, Parmenides, and others.

5. A further aspect of the Platonic Dialogue may be noticed — it is a criticism — a criticism on popular notions, on the popular use of lan-

guage, on the Sophists, and on the previous philosophy.

6. It is the life of Socrates and a description of his style of conversation. Yet in none of Plato's Dialogues (except the *Apology*) is he described as an out-door preacher, walking and talking in the streets of Athens.

7. It is a poem—"Poema magis putandum quam comicorum poetarum." Hence you must expect a poetical rather than a logical or systematic representation of a subject. The truth is not divided into chapters, or placed under heads. It appears in many aspects, harmonious and discordant. Hence also the mythical element: partly the old tradition, of which the allegorical interpretation has so great a hold on the minds of men, partly the veil in which the future is half-concealed and half-revealed, when, to use an expression of Plato, we have arrived at the end of the intellectual world.

8. The Dialogues of Plato are very different in character. There is a growth and also a decline of them. There are the earlier Dialogues, such as the *Lysis* and *Charmides*, which have more of a picture, and in which children are introduced in a very pleasing manner; the larger Dialogues of the most perfect form, half imaginative and poetical, such as the *Gorgias*, *Phædrus*, and *Phædo*;

or those in which the comic element prevails, as in the *Euthydemus*, *Symposium*, *Cratylus.* These might also be called satyric dramas, for Socrates certainly has on the Silenus mask. Further, the *Republic*, in which may be found all the characteristics of Plato; the *Parmenides*, the finest piece of dialectic of them all, in which the joinings of the question and answer are most precise; the later Dialogues, such as the *Philebus*, the *Sophist*, and *Politicus*, in which the metaphysical element prevails; the *Laws*, in which the dialogue is reduced to a mere form—in the last five books it almost entirely disappears—and impedes rather than assists the discussion.

9. Plato's is the most perfect of styles. The description of style is always difficult, like the description of music. We mean to say, that it is more graceful, more simple, more idiomatic, more expressive, more varied, more rhythmical, than any other. Yet it is not free from defects: (1) it is not grammatically accurate; (2) it is not free from tautology. The observation of both these defects has a considerable bearing upon the text, for when we recognise them we no longer want to alter passages on the ground of tautology or of defective grammar. The character of Plato's, as of any other style, can only be gathered from himself.

References, Chapter I.

p. 1. (1) Plato was born in 428 B.C., the year of Pericles' death, and he died in 346 B.C., when the power of Athens was already threatened by Philip of Macedon. Socrates was put to death in 399 B.C., and Plato's literary career began shortly afterwards. The *Republic* was probably produced about 378 B.C., just when the power of Thebes was rising as a third claimant (ἔφεδρος) with Athens and Sparta, for supremacy in Hellas. The books of the *Laws* were published after the author's death.

p. 8. *Symposium*, pp. 185, 188, 212; *Phædo*, pp. 84-88; *Phædrus*, pp. 243 and 259.

p. 9. *Gomperz*, vol. ii. (German edition), pp. 359, 371; Nettleship on *Republic*, pp. 214, 341.

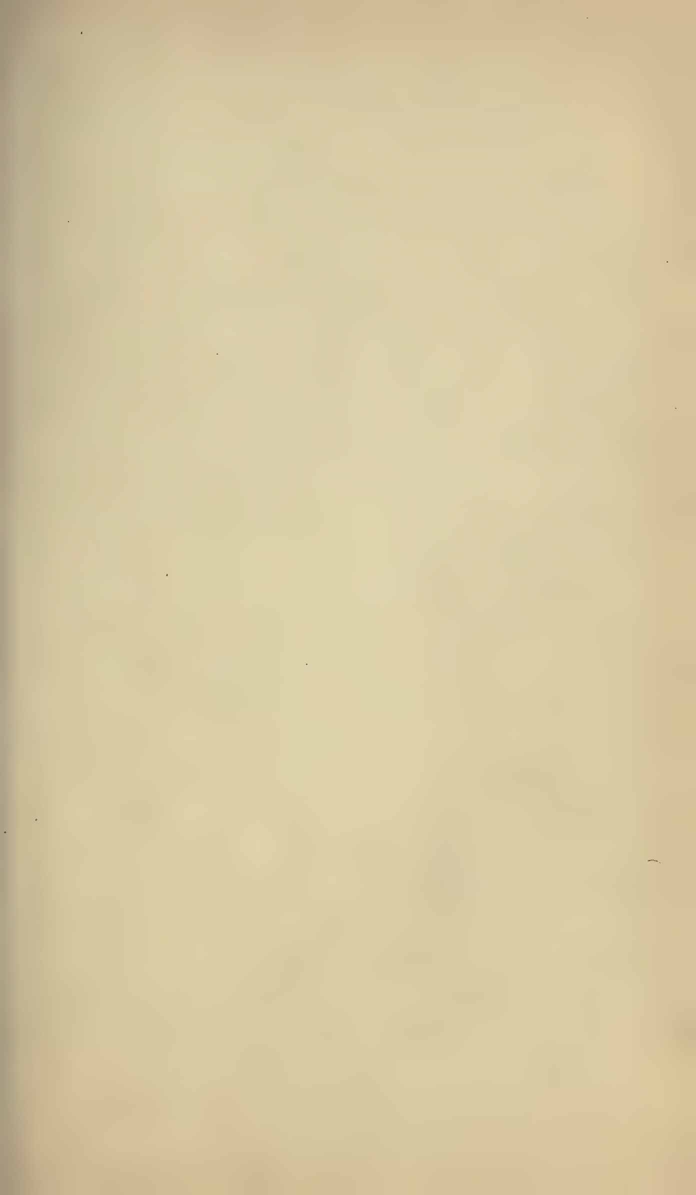
p. 11. Schleiermacher's Introductions to Plato, translated by Dobson.

p. 12. (1) *Protagoras*, pp. 316 ff.

p. 13. (3) *Theætetus*, pp. 142 ff.

(5) *Sophist*, pp. 242-250.

p. 14. (7) *Symposium; Phædrus; Republic*, Book X., pp. 614 ff.



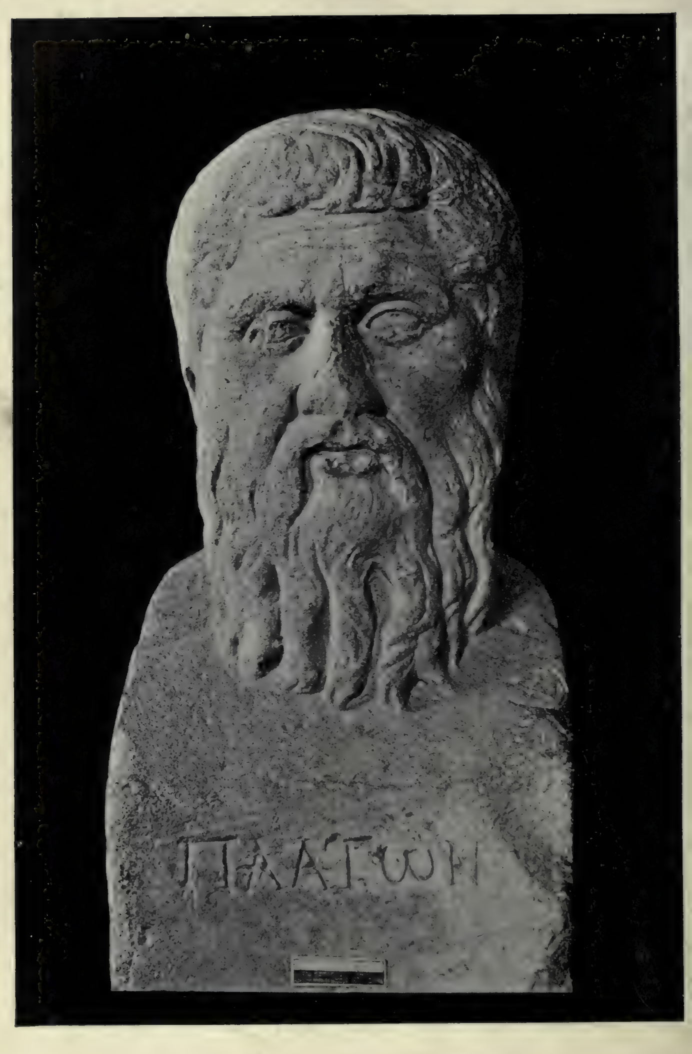


Plate III.—Bust of Plato.
(Berlin Museum.)

[*To face page* 17.

CHAPTER II

THE MORAL AIM

1. THE course of speculation which owed its first impulse to Socrates was primarily ethical. His lifelong effort to awaken thought amongst his countrymen was inspired with a high moral purpose and had a deeply religious motive. He saw that Athenian life, both public and private, was on the downward grade. The tyrant city had lost hold of that principle of equity which, as exemplified in the policy of Aristides, had awakened the enthusiasm of Æschylus. Party spirit and private ambition were undermining patriotism. The revenge on Mytilene and the massacre at Melos showed the passion of which the Democracy had become the victim. The disastrous Sicilian expedition, the outcome of an unbridled thirst for empire, had left the remnant weakened and embittered; and for a time at least the state had been divided against herself. And though the civil war had ended in a general amnesty, the

B

restored Democracy had shown in many ways the demoralizing effects of a long and unsuccessful struggle. The blind rage of the populace after Arginusæ, which Socrates himself had witnessed, was a convincing proof. The lowering of the tone of society and the progress of corruption in domestic life are evident to readers of Aristophanes, and of the earlier orators. Old customs were becoming stale, and the religious sanction which had hitherto sustained them was weakened by the shallow enlightenment which raised questions that it could not solve.

In the midst of this confusion Socrates had set himself with a deliberate purpose to discover the principle, which he was confident would provide the cure for all these evils. The sentiment of Justice, which had been fostered by the influence of the oracles at Delphi and Eleusis, had yielded to calculations of expediency: traditional associations had not been proof against the inroads of scepticism. Socrates sought to place morality on a foundation which could not so readily be shaken, to discover principles of conduct that should be independent of custom and opinion. He looked for a law of human life that should hold as universally as the most firmly established natural law. Fire burns alike amongst Hellenes and Barbarians; even so, could we but

know it, right must be right for all men everywhere. His method was that of casual talk. Confessing ignorance himself, he searched the thoughts of other men, through a species of cross-examination which would have been impossible anywhere but in conversation-loving Athens. His questions always turned on points immediately connected with human life and conduct, individual and social. Plato indeed speaks of him in the *Phædo* as having been, at one time, fascinated by physical theories, and as hoping great things from Anaxagoras; but in this the disciple is probably attributing to the Master his own later experience. It was indeed impossible that ethical speculation could long be held apart from those far-reaching thoughts which Heraclitus and Parmenides had broached in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C., and which in a secondary phase pervaded the intellectual atmosphere in the generation preceding Plato.

The lifelong effort of Socrates was consecrated for his disciples through the manner of his death, and by Plato in particular it was idealized and perpetuated. To place morality on a scientific basis and so promote the improvement of humanity was his persistent aim, pursued with unflinching tenacity through fifty years; but the very enthusiasm of the pursuit gave to the

scientific or intellectual ideal an emotional force which could not be separated from it. To bear this in mind is of the first importance in any study of Plato.

2. The reader of the *Republic* is led through several stages from Socratic questionings to full-blown Platonism. The Socrates who meets us on the threshold in Book I. is already the Platonic Socrates, but he resembles more the ironic provoking personality of the *Protagoras* and *Gorgias* than the philosopher-poet of the *Phædrus*, or the calmly contemplative thinker of the *Phædo*. He leads his respondent from a commonplace beginning through a maze of importunate questioning to a conclusion in which nothing is concluded. As in the *Laches*, *Charmides* and *Lysis*, all present are convinced of ignorance, and as in the *Protagoras*, the position of Socrates, as well as that of his opponent, is felt to be logically unsatisfactory. It is assumed that Virtue, like the Arts, must have a law and principle of its own, and must consist in an adaptation of means to a definite end; and arguments from analogy are adduced to prove that the just man is not a self-seeker, and to raise a presumption that in some way it shall be well with the just and ill with the unjust; but the thesis is not demonstrated, for justice has not been defined.

As the Dialogue proceeds, the topics raised and the method of dealing with them have no longer the Socratic stamp, but belong to the mental atmosphere of the time of Plato. The first stage of education is not allowed to be complete until the pupil can recognise the *forms* of Courage, Temperance, and Justice in all their various manifestations, and in returning from public to private excellence, the four cardinal virtues are assumed to be an exhaustive classification. It has been lately pointed out that Plato is here in advance of his own earlier thought: for in the *Protagoras*, the virtue of Holiness or Piety is mentioned separately from Justice, but in the *Euthyphro* it is shown that Justice comprehends Holiness, in other words, that true religion is inseparable from Morality. When in enumerating human excellences in the praise of the philosophic nature in Book VI., a different set of categories seems to come into play, including, for example, Gentleness and Liberality, it may be assumed that these are also comprehended under the notion of Justice or Righteousness, which in the end appears to be the basis of all the Virtues.

In describing the philosopher the notion of virtue is otherwise modified. For example, the definition of Courage in Book IV. is limited by the epithet "civic" or "political." That is because

the ground has not yet been prepared for the higher notion of a courage due to the development of reason, which looks on death as unimportant, because a single life seems of small account to one who is contemplating all time and all existence, and who can set his face like a flint against every temptation to palter in any way with truth or right.

In fact, the only just man in the highest sense is the philosophic ruler, who in Book IX. is identified with the King, for he alone has a clear vision of the supreme principle from which all true virtue flows, and in him alone the ideal of righteousness is fully embodied. The supreme end towards which all nature is dimly struggling is clearly known to him; he cannot do or say anything against the truth; and the rules laid down in Book II. for all statements about divine things are to him self-evident, and not traditional; viz., that God is not the author of evil, that He is unchangeable and absolutely true in thought and act and word.

In considering the nature and training of the philosopher, Plato is by no means guided by mere intellectualism. The other qualities required are no doubt regarded as deducible from the love of truth to which they are akin, but they cannot be realized or developed through mere learning.

The philosopher is an all-round man, and in this as much as anything is distinguished from the strange uncouth pretenders with whom he is contrasted. Living in a perfect state, he fulfils all righteousness.

3. It has become almost a commonplace amongst exponents of Greek Philosophy to say that the Ancients studied ethics through politics, that the conception of the state was prior to that of the individual, and that moral as distinguished from social science is a plant of modern growth. But a closer study of the Platonic Dialogues does not wholly justify this view. What are now generally recognised as Plato's earlier writings, all turn upon questions of individual conduct. In the attempts to define the separate virtues of Courage, Temperance, and Holiness, or to analyze the nature of Friendship, the instances are drawn from individual experience, and when the question comes to be concerning virtue in general, this is still considered as a personal attribute. In his conversation with Protagoras, what has been called the utilitarian argument of Socrates does not contemplate "the greatest happiness of the greatest number," but the greatest happiness of each person in the long run. When Meno is asked how virtue is acquired, that is still understood to be the virtue of the individual. The defence of Justice against

Ambition in the *Gorgias* is maintained by one who abstains from public life altogether, and it is confirmed by a vision of judgment, in which every soul is brought severally before her Judge.

It is true that in Book I. of the *Republic*, Thrasymachus in answering the question raised by Socrates rudely interposes with a ready-made theory of government which is not immediately relevant. But when the enquiry is resumed by the two brothers in Book II., the point in debate is the rule of life for the individual,—"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" Only when it is found difficult to determine this apart from social evolution, Socrates propounds his theory of the state. When the ideal commonwealth has been developed and Justice in the state has been discovered, the definition of individual Justice is again so personal as to be hardly distinguishable from that of Temperance, because, as Gomperz has observed, this virtue also is still regarded as a harmony of the single life, without any distinct acknowledgment that it can only be truly conceived in relation to society, or as Aristotle expresses it, "to another" (*πρὸς ἕτερον*).

The whole work is pervaded by a strong underlying aspiration towards ethical perfection. The young life is to be surrounded by influences from which all that is unwholesome or debasing is

banished, as in a garden ground amid salubrious airs. Gymnastic training is directed to the attainment of absolute self-control, and in the higher education what is most emphasized is the drawing forth of the faculty of reason, so that each man shall become a law to himself. When the imperfect states have been described, and the declension through Oligarchy and Democracy to Tyranny has been explained, imagination is finally concentrated on the image of a soul in which passion has entire dominion over reason; and in contrast to this, Socrates points to the pattern in the Heavens after which each man may fashion himself aright, whether the ideal commonwealth is ever realized or not. Lastly, the proof of immortality and the vision of judgment in Book X. are brought in to emphasize the solemn responsibility which the previous argument has laid on every person who considers it seriously:—"For great is the issue at stake, greater than appears, whether a man is to be good or bad. And what will any one be profited if under the influence of honour, or money, or power, aye, or under the excitement of poetry, he neglect justice and virtue?" (Book X., p. 608).

4. The conception of the State, in which the *Republic* differs from all previous dialogues, marks a distinct advance in Plato's ethical theory. While not departing from the Socratic principle that

virtue must be based on knowledge, or rather from Plato's own conviction of the supremacy of reason, room is here made for the reality of an unconscious, unphilosophic virtue, consisting in obedience to the law that has been prescribed by one who has the reason in himself. Thus a solution is found for the difficulty which haunts the Platonic Socrates in the *Protagoras* and *Meno*. Experience proved that virtue could exist apart from knowledge, yet the conviction of Socrates that virtue and knowledge are inseparable, remained unshaken. In the *Meno* such unconscious virtue is attributed to a divine instinct or inspiration, which, however, is of precarious tenure unless bound fast by the force of philosophic reasoning. But in the *Republic*, through the conception of a philosophic ruler willingly obeyed by men and women trained according to reason, a natural place is given to what had seemed an unaccountable phenomenon. And from the point of view thus attained, at once more ideal and more concrete, what had once been a wild plant, growing by the grace of Heaven at its own sweet will, is developed into a cultivated product that finds a place in the complete regenerated whole.

5. Plato's moral ideal is largely intellectual. As Socrates identified virtue with knowledge, so in Plato's philosopher or perfect man rationality

is the predominant factor. Nothing is further from Plato's notion than an ethical theory which develops conscience or the moral sense out of primal sympathy. Modern sentimentalism would have been abhorrent to his mind. But Reason does not stand alone with him. The famous image of the chariot in the *Phædrus*, representing the higher life of man, includes the active powers. The charioteer would be helpless without the noble steed. So in the *Republic*, the height of excellence is not attained through contemplation only. The nature which alone is capable of the highest culture, has the elements of courage and liberality as well as intellectual aspiration, and great stress is laid on the importance of combining the gentler qualities belonging to a love of learning with the robustness and steadiness which are the necessary conditions of strenuous and persistent action. In other words, although the needful terminology, as will be seen presently, had not been invented, native intelligence is not enough without a firm will. Once more the end and aim of all philosophy, the ideal good, has a practical as well as a speculative significance. This will appear more fully in the next chapter.

6. Plato's ethical theory is largely coloured with Pythagoreanism. The brotherhood who owned Pythagoras for master, had flourished in a previous

generation, but the tradition of that way of life, uniting scientific culture with ascetic virtue, lived on in Western Hellas, and was exemplified in striking personalities with whom it is probable that Plato himself had come in contact. There, more than in contemporary Athens, he would find some image of his master Socrates.

The example of Sparta viewed from a distance is another influence which colours Plato's ethical theory. In sharp contrast to the volatile susceptibility of the Athenian, who is caricatured in the "democratic man," the sturdy rigidity of Spartan habits presented an appearance of noble self-control. The élite of Lacedæmon, with their contempt for handicrafts, their pride of birth, their indomitable valour, their traditional respect for elders, and their obedience to rule, presented an image which had an irresistible charm for the high-born Athenian, who under the restored democracy was dependent on the capricious policy of a magistracy chosen by lot. That uncensured freedom of social life from day to day which Pericles had eulogised, appeared to Plato as to other Philo-Laconians a dangerous hindrance in the way of all reformation. Gomperz well observes that Plato is most severe against those faults to which his own poetic nature was most prone—emotional sensibility, mental impulsiveness, and

a restless longing for change. However this may have been, the ascetic hardness which is traceable in many passages of the *Republic* is partly due to a reaction from the Athenian towards the Spartan model.

7. Mr Grote would claim Plato as a supporter of utilitarianism in morals, and he quotes the sentence, "Nothing nobler has been said or can be said than that the most useful is always the most sacred." In other words utility is to be the measure of holiness. But, first, this is a maxim of statecraft and not of morality. Secondly, it refers not to the end but to the means; and thirdly, the word translated "useful" signifies rather what is *beneficial.* There is a wide gulf in Plato's vocabulary between the useful or even the expedient and the beneficial. The end in view is not the greatest pleasure of the greatest number, which to Plato would sound like a scoff in this connection, but the highest good of the whole, coinciding really with what is best for every part.

8. Plato's idea of life as a balance or harmony, in which feeling is controlled by volition under the command of reason, may be of great value to us in the modern world, where exaggerations of all kinds, sentimental, religious, individual, revolutionary, reactionary, are continually threatening to spoil the sense of proportion. Nor is the balance

which he contemplates a mere inert or aimless poise in which action is suspended or weakened. Let a man bring his desires into conformity with reason, by educating aright his higher and lower nature and what comes between, in other words the powers of thought, of feeling, and of will; and then let him act with all his might. Although some passages, as has been lately said, seem to point at the suppression or minimizing of feeling or emotion, that is not the impression which is finally left upon the mind. Not quietism, but reasoned and consistent energy is the lesson taught. The man within the Man is to employ the lion in subduing the baser elements below, but he is also to train and cultivate what in the lower nature is gentle and can be made subservient to high purposes in life.

REFERENCES, CHAPTER II.

p. 17. Mytilene, see *Thucydides*, Book III., cc. 36-50; and for Melos, *Thucydides*, Book V., cc. 84-116.

p. 18. For Arginusæ, 406 B.C., see Xenophon's *Hellenica*, I., 6 ff; Plato, *Apology*, p. 32 B; *Gorgias*, p. 474 A.

p. 19. *Phædo*, p. 96 A ff.; *Gomperz*, vol ii. (German edition), p. 351.

p. 21. (1) *Gomperz*, vol ii. (German edition), p. 295.
(2) Political courage, *Republic*, IV., p. 430 C.

p. 24. (1) *Gomperz*, vol ii. (German edition), pp. 378, 379.
(2) Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.* v. 3.

p. 26. *Protagoras*, p. 320; *Meno*, pp. 99, 100.

p. 28. (1) The Democratic Man is described in *Republic*, VIII., p. 561.

(2) *Gomperz*, vol ii. (German edition), p. 401.

p. 30. The man within the Man, see *Republic*, IX., p. 588.

CHAPTER III

THE METAPHYSICAL BACKGROUND

"The speculation was excellent in Parmenides and Plato, though in them only a speculation, that all things by a scale did ascend to Unity."—*Bacon.*

1. SOCRATIC enquiry was by no means a philosophy without assumptions. The Platonic Socrates always assumes two postulates, which to Socrates himself probably appeared as one,—the existence of truth, the reality of good. That was the starting-point of what proved a long and tedious road. If it be asked whether good was sought for the sake of truth, or truth for the sake of good, it may be replied, that in so far as either statement has a meaning, the latter is nearer to the fact. Insatiable as was the intellectual curiosity both of Socrates and Plato, their moral purpose was more far-reaching. Plato never loses sight for a moment of his ever-present object, the improvement of mankind. But it was by clearing men's thoughts about themselves and the conditions of their life,

that Socrates had laboured to point out the higher way. He was convinced that if mankind knew more they would do better, if they thought rightly they would act rightly; and hence the stress of ethical reflection was concentrated on intellectual phenomena. In following the path thus opened, it was inevitable that a mind such as Plato's should endeavour to grapple with the first principles of thought, which from the prevailing tendency to realize mental abstractions he could not fail to identify with the first principles of existence. Nature and the human mind were to him inseparable.

Socrates appears to have resolutely turned away from the earlier philosophers, whose dogmas seemed to him unverifiable, while he made a fresh beginning on the ground of every-day experience. But it was impossible to stop at the point he reached. The thoughts of the great minds of the sixth century had impregnated the intellectual atmosphere, and such men as Gorgias and Protagoras had brought them nearer to the restless intellects of Athenian youth towards the close of the fifth century.

If we may trust Aristotle, Plato had himself in early life been imbued with Heraclitean doctrine. However this may have been, both these and the Eleatic subtilties, or thoughts

derived from them, were in the air, and no course of abstract reasoning was possible unless the dominant forces of contemporary thought were critically examined and the prime fallacies which vitiated opinion could be finally disposed of. Zeno, applying, as he professed, the teaching of Parmenides, had brought his negative dialectic to bear destructively on ordinary thinking, and thus the "unresting flow" of Heraclitus was transferred from nature to opinion; and whether the Ionian or the Eleatic teaching prevailed, the threatened result was barren scepticism. Either all phenomena were relative and nothing was absolute or permanent, or the absolute, if it existed, was unattainable, unknowable, and inexpressible. Plato ultimately resolved this doubt by proving on the one hand the relative nature of the philosopher's yea and nay, and yet on the other hand maintaining the truth of both when corresponding to reality. When he wrote the *Republic* he had not quite reached this point, but he was approaching it. His efforts in this direction are continually to be read between the lines. He more than once alludes to them as the "longer way," in which his brothers would be unable to follow him, and the dialogue cannot be interpreted without some understanding of his metaphysical position. It would be a mistake indeed to interpret everything

with reference to those general principles towards which the Platonic Socrates is gradually leading his respondents, for Plato's thought, no less than his master's, was plunged in experience, to which he again and again returns, as Antæus to his Mother Earth. The vein of observation in him is rich and deep; he sets out from familiar facts of life, and keeps them well in view, but the phenomena are continually focused and grasped anew by the passion for generalization which finds its formulated expression in the doctrine of ideas. Thus Plato, as it has been said, walks and flies alternately or rather at the same time. Socrates had sought for definitions which should be proof against negative instances. In carrying this process further Plato rose to higher generalities, and could not pause until he reached the universal. In this abstraction from human experience he found the unity of which the older philosophers in different ways had dreamed. The fascination of those earlier speculations came over him afresh, and he wove their leading principles together with the living thought of Socrates into the web of his philosophy. What was at first a theory of human life was thus extended, till it seemed to embrace the universe.

2. The human intellect, says Bacon, forges ahead, and finds no rest until it overshoots itself and falls

back on final causes, which after all belong to human nature and not to the Universe or to the nature of things. Plato's thought, no doubt, lies open to this criticism, but not more so than the "dry light" of Heraclitus so dear to Bacon himself, or the "atom" of Leucippus and Democritus, which our natural philosophers from Bacon downwards have found so rich in subsequent developments. All alike are "anticipations" in the Baconian sense,—

> "Blank 'forecastings' of a creature
> Moving about in worlds not realized."

The beginnings of physical observation and experiment were rather due to Hippocrates, by whom Plato was attracted, but whom Bacon would have classed with Gilbert and the other empirics.

Generalization, abstraction, idealization, these three, commencing in the ethical sphere and supported by mathematical analogies, were the main elements or factors in Plato's doctrine of ideas. Limited at first to the facts of human experience on which Socrates discoursed, the theory was gradually extended to "a contemplation of all time and all existence," and side by side with the speculative theory there was evolved a dialectical method, first rising from particulars to universals, and then dividing "according to nature;" and thus

having both an upward and also a downward way.

The doctrine was gradually developed and took various shapes according to the mood of the philosopher, the aspect which the world presented to him at the time, and the nature of the particular questions which he was considering; but the student can trace a continuous progress, not from darkness to light, but from haziness towards clearness and consistency. As contemplation widens, the method becomes more distinct.

The *Cratylus* had ended with a sort of dream. After a vain endeavour to decide between the rival doctrines of transience and permanence through an analysis of language, in which the wildest etymologies are proposed, Socrates at last suggests that truth is to be sought not in words at all, but in "something far more deeply interfused"—an absolute reality, of which words are but the shadowy and imperfect symbols. There, if anywhere, we may look for permanence underlying change. The theory is at first surrounded with a halo of poetical imagination. In the *Meno* the controversial question, how to enquire about what one does not know, is met by a reference to Pindar and the Orphic poets, who sing of immortality and of the world-wide wanderings of the soul. The potentiality of

knowledge, in the undeveloped mind, is accounted for by the latent existence of thoughts more or less forgotten, belonging to the experience of a previous state. And this position is exemplified through the examination of a Greek slave, who by means of a few questions cunningly put is brought to a clear acknowledgment of the truth of a geometrical proposition. Thus emerges the famous doctrine of Reminiscence which some have identified with the substance of Plato's teaching. But it is really only the husk in which the kernel is contained. It recurs afterwards in various connections, but always accompanied with conceptions of a less mythical and more rational cast. The Platonic Socrates is *reminded* of it in the *Phædo*, but in the interval the "ideas" have been much talked over, and they are now more distinctly conceived as eternal "forms" or self-existent unities, corresponding to the terms in common use by which we describe our experience, especially in morals and mathematics. These forms alone constitute existence: they are perfect, whereas experience and language are imperfect; eternal, whereas these are changeable. They have at once a subjective and objective reality (*τὸ ἐν ἡμῖν —τὸ ἐν τῇ φύσει*). In the *Phædrus* the vision of these absolute forms in the supra-mundane sphere is described amid gorgeous imagery, but stress

is also laid on the logical aspect of the theory according to which no soul can enter into human form without the power of understanding general propositions; and an ideal method of generalizing, specializing, and classifying is developed in the sequel.

In the *Republic* a further stage is reached. The encroaching intellect is no longer contented, as in the *Phædo*, with the most stable hypotheses, but the philosopher soars into a region above all hypotheses, in which every trace of sensible experience has disappeared. He rises from height to height of abstraction, till he takes hold of the idea of good, and from this he descends by clearly-reasoned stages, until he has grasped ideally the world of action and sees all natural kinds in their truth of being. In the idea of Good a supreme moral principle is blended with the highest generalization, in which all formal, final and efficient causes are combined. Good, as it was said in the *Phædo*, where there is an anticipation of the same conception, is the Atlas on whose shoulders rests the universal frame.

The idea of Good in Books VI. and VII. may also be compared with the "Ocean of beauty" which is gradually revealed to the soul of the philosophic lover in the *Symposium*. But there

the mind which has been so enlightened is allowed to rest in the contemplation of the universal, which "after toil and storm" it has attained. The more concrete conception developed in the latter portion of the *Phædrus*, requiring division "according to nature," as the counterpart of sound generalization, or the image in Book VI. of the higher reason descending through a chain of ideal forms to the lowest species, is not yet, in the *Symposium*, distinctly present to the thinker's mind. The analogy of Mathematics gave what seemed a confirmation to Plato's theory. No two objects of sense are exactly equal. Yet we can think of exact quantity; and on this basis men have built a superstructure of truths which are unquestioned and self-evident. Why may not a corresponding certainty be attained in moral and metaphysical enquiry? Such a result was the goal of Plato's endeavour, and at the time of writing the *Republic* he was confident of having it within reach.

3. The objects of sense are transient, shifting, contradictory, but the mind can rise beyond them, to the contemplation of truths which are permanent, stable, and consistent. That such truths are abstractions from sense, that they are after all relative to experience, notions attained through generalization and needing to be verified, is a

thought which at some moments floated before Plato's mind; but in the transcendent glow of enthusiasm which attended his discovery, such reflections were swallowed up in the excess of light. As Jowett said in the *Essay on Natural Religion*, "they were not ideas but gods; penetrating the soul of the disciple, providing the instruments of every kind of knowledge."

Plato could hardly realize that his ideal doctrine was a vacant scheme, the reflex of his own highest thought, to be filled up, if at all, through many ages of scientific labour. And yet in some ways philosophy seems now to be at last returning towards the unity of conception that marked her origin. She is growing weary of dry generalizations and a sterile intellectualism, and as Plato attributed to his ideas not only truth, but power, so recent thinkers have tended to combine the notions so long sundered, of thought and reality. Thus Mr Percy Gardner, in his suggestive work, the *Exploratio Evangelica*, says that Ideas, as conceived by Plato, "are not mere abstractions, but real existences pregnant of results, efficient as well as formal causes, endued with life and motion."

A time arrived, however, when the difficulties inherent in the doctrine became clearly apparent to Plato himself. These are elaborately stated in the *Parmenides* and *Theætetus*, and the discussion

of the questions which arise in consequence opens the way for metaphysical developments of great subtilty and convincing clearness. In this way distinct progress was made in the two sciences Logic and Psychology. On both these subjects, accordingly, it is necessary to add a few words.

4. The contrast of Universal and Particular is involved in every proposition whether affirmative or negative, and the resolution of doubts hence arising is necessary not only to philosophy but to the use of language.

The consciousness of speculative difficulties gives a new turn to Plato's thoughts. The Ideas are by no means relinquished, but they change their complexion. The philosopher has become aware of an element of relativity in the ideal world, and of the need of a new theory of production (γένεσις) and of perception. He endeavours to clear the ground through a criticism of previous philosophies. Old questions arise in a new shape. How is error possible? What is implied in negation? What is the criterion of truth? As the bright haze passes off from the thinker's vision, the Ideas are seen as no longer separable from their embodiments; the mind returns to a contemplation of the actual world of growth and decay, but always in the light of the Ideal. Processes of all kinds, above all the great

process of the Universe, excite an inexhaustible interest, and the root notions which are identified with supreme existence are no longer regarded as "*summa genera*," but as a kind of categories pervading and conditioning all beneath them. Already in the *Theætetus*, Being and Not-being, Likeness and Unlikeness, Same and Other, are notions of the mind concerning sensible things. So a modern thinker, whom Kant has convinced that the transcendental "thing in itself" is inconceivable, might set himself to prove that relativity is reconcilable with the subjective Universal.

In imaginative passages, such as the opening of the *Timæus* or the myth in the *Politicus*, the old dualism with the doctrine of pre-existence and of transmigration ever and anon recurs, accompanied with the religious feeling which has deepened with time; but in the metaphysical discussion, which becomes more and more formal and exact, the logical aspect of philosophical questions is presented with increasing clearness, until in the *Laws* speculation gives place to methodical application.

All this has little to do with the *Republic*. But it was necessary to warn the reader that in this Dialogue Plato's metaphysical theory had not yet reached its final stage.

5. A corresponding growth or transition is per-

ceptible in his psychology. And here also the *Republic* holds a middle or transitional place. The soul whose immortality is the subject of the *Phædo* was there asserted to be one and indivisible, a simple substance without parts. But this view, as Gomperz observes, is not consistently maintained, for there are souls in Hades who are still immortal, although the lower elements in them have triumphed over the higher. Notwithstanding some brilliant glimpses, such as the clear statement of the law of association (like other pregnant utterances occurring incidentally), the psychology of the *Phædo* is still inchoate. The vision in the *Phædrus* is more distinct. The soul is there a composite nature, comprising higher and lower impulses, of which the former are willingly obedient to reason, all three (the charioteer and the two horses) having seen the truth in a former state. That vision gave the hint for the tripartite analysis of the soul in the *Republic*, which does not, however, proceed exactly on the same lines.

For the spirited element in the *Republic* is not a precise repetition of the white or noble steed of the *Phædrus* myth. Though it takes part with the higher faculty in the conflict of reason with desire, yet it can be injuriously softened and weakened, or hardened and barbarized by bad training, and may even lose the lion-nature and

degenerate into a malicious ape. It must also be observed that the threefold classification is said at the time to be provisional and not exhaustive, and that in Book X., under the fine allegory of the statue of the marine god Glaucus, the doubt is hinted whether, after all, in her true nature, the individual soul is many or one. In fact, the problem of the one and many, which was by-and-by to be so troublesome, has already risen upon the horizon. In the *Timæus*, the tripartite division re-appears, but both the lower faculties of anger and desire are attributed only to the mortal state, and the soul when she gladly escapes at death leaves them behind.

Ancient philosophy has no term exactly corresponding to volition or will-power. Even in Aristotle the nearest analogue is "that which chooses" (*τὸ προαιρούμενον*) or that "leads the way" (*τὸ ἡγούμενον*). But it would be a mistake of verbalism to suppose that therefore the active powers are omitted in Plato's scheme. The soul is the first principle of all motion, of all activity. It matters little whether the charioteer or the white horse is the prime mover, for they are really one. In the analysis of the *Republic*, the word translated by "spirit" or "spirited element" corresponds most nearly to our notion of will. But it has also associations that belong to Butler's

principle of "Resentment," and contains a passionate element from which the modern notion is exempt. But it is to be remembered that in the Philosopher-King this principle is no less highly trained and only less prominent than contemplative reason. He is not a thinker only, but a ruler of men.

In the *Laws* the Athenian stranger surprises us with the possibility of an evil soul, else how account for the predominance of evil in the world? That evil should prevail finally in the spiritual region, is of course not believed for a moment; but it is evident that in these enquiries, though he made substantial progress, Plato never arrived at absolute clearness. In *Republic*, Book VII., the psychological problem is approached from the intellectual side. The transition from mere sense perception to active thought is very subtly described, but in a manner which shows that the more finished analysis of the *Theætetus* had not yet been worked out, though it may have been projected as part of the "longer way." Nor had the definition of thought as the soul's dialogue with herself, or the fine distinctions of the *Philebus*, between memory, recollection, and imagination, been as yet elaborated.

The new psychology of to-day is haunted by corresponding doubts. The phenomena of double

consciousness, of sub-conscious and pre-conscious conditions, of somnambulism and hypnotism, are the subject of enquiries which are still in progress, and the investigator is looking forward to a time when, as Plato says, "we shall see the soul as she really is, and whether she have one form or many." "Of her affections and of the forms which she takes in this present life," we have not "said enough," but as much as there is room for in this little volume.

REFERENCES, CHAPTER III.

p. 33. On Heraclitus and Parmenides, see especially *Gomperz*, vol i. (English translation), pp. 66 ff., 166 ff.; Plato's *Theætetus* (Clarendon Press Edition): Appendix.

p. 35. Bacon's *Novum Organon*, Aph. XLVIII.

p. 36. (1) Bacon's *Novum Organon*, Aph. LXIII., LXXI.
(2) Hippocrates praised by Plato in the *Phædrus*, p. 270.

p. 37. (1) *Cratylus*, pp. 439, 440.
(2) *Meno*, pp. 81 ff.; *Phædo*, p. 72 E.

p. 38. *Phædo*, p. 103 B; *Phædrus*, p. 249 B C.

p. 39. For Good as the first cause, see *Phædo*, p. 99 C; and for the Ocean of beauty, *Symposium*, p. 210 D.

p. 40. *Phædo*, p. 74 A.

p. 41. Jowett's *Essay on Natural Religion* (2nd vol. of 3rd edition of St Paul's Epistle, p. 222)

p. 42. Clarendon Press Edition of Plato's *Republic*, vol ii., pp. 26-46.

p. 43. (1) For Plato's criticism of previous philosophies, see especially the *Sophist*, pp. 242 C-249 D.
(2) *Theætetus*, pp. 184 C-185 B.

p. 44. (1) *Phædo*, p. 78 B ff.
(2) Law of Association; see *Phædo*, p. 73.
(3) On the spirited element; see especially *Republic*, Book III., p. 411; Book IX., p. 590 B.

p. 45. (1) For the statue of the marine god, Glaucus, see *Republic*, Book X., p. 611.
(2) *Timæus*, p. 69 D.
(3) Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.* iii. 5.

p. 46. (1) For the evil soul, see *Laws*, Book X. p., 896 E.
(2) *Theætetus*, p. 189 E; *Sophist*, p. 263 E; *Philebus*, pp. 38, 39.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ASPECTS

I. AMONG the subjects of Socrates' persistent questioning as enumerated by Xenophon, besides the nature of virtue and of the several virtues, were problems aimed at a definition of human society. What is a state? What is government? What is it to be a ruler of men? Of Platonic Dialogues probably earlier than the *Republic*, the only one in which a theme of this character is at all developed is the *Euthydemus*, where the Platonic Socrates leads an ingenuous youth through a maze of cross-questioning to a consideration of the royal science of political wisdom. In the *Republic*, for the first time, political theory is brought seriously to the aid of ethics. The prevailing notion ridiculed in the *Gorgias* and long afterwards controverted in the *Laws*, that the first duty of every government is to maintain itself in power, is caricatured in the person of Thrasymachus, and is traversed by the Platonic maxim,

. all government is for the sake of the governed. This thesis is supported by the familiar analogy of the Arts. But the doubts of Glaucon and Adeimantus are not thus satisfied. Socrates therefore goes back to the origin of society, and formulates the fundamental principle of the division of labour, on which ultimately the definition of Justice in the State is based. As the commonwealth becomes more complex and artificial wants arise, opposing interests are developed and war becomes inevitable. Hence one special function of the highest importance is that of a body of defenders and protectors, who are to hold in check any possible assaults of evil from without and from within. Plato never arrives at the conclusion that there is "a soul of goodness in things evil," but he is aware that in the actual world, the presence of Evil is a condition of Good, giving the necessary stimulus to beneficent activity. The "Guardians" are, to begin with, a standing army formed by selection from the citizens themselves, and their commanders, elected in the first instance according to seniority and merit, are the destined rulers of the state.

To arrive at this point, Plato has employed an ingenious combination of experience and generalization. That men have need of one another is matter of experience. That each can serve others

best by keeping to his proper work is a plau… observation somewhat naïvely put, but one which veils the main object which Plato had in view. He is preparing for the cardinal distinction of deliberative, executive, and industrial functions, corresponding, as Plato fancied, to the tripartite division of the soul. He is far from conceiving the unlimited application of the new principle. Had he imagined the minute ramifications of mechanical labour in the modern world, he would have been amazed and horrified. He says, indeed, that human nature is coined into a multiplicity of units, but he could not realize the full significance of his own remark. Had he done so, he would have appealed from the abstraction of unity to the other abstraction of the whole. Humanity, he would have said, even in its lowest forms, must not be reduced to such miserable shreds. The cobbler, even, is not a cobbler only, but a citizen of the state, still less may any one in the form of man be confined to the production of one part of a shoe.

From the principle once established are deduced the conditions under which the saviours of society are to live. One man one function; therefore the soldier must not be a trader; he must not have property to look after, nor a separate home. The consequences of this triumph of abstraction will

...nsidered afterwards. Again, the whole state ... not to be many but one; hence limits must be assigned to the accumulation of wealth, else under the appearance of one commonwealth there will be two communities at least, one of the rich, another of the poor. The guardians are to be on the watch against two great dangers, the extremes of wealth and poverty. How they are to provide against these is not clearly stated, but some hints are given in treating of the decline of states, and the task here left to the wisdom of the rulers is met with definite regulations in the *Laws*.

Adeimantus interposes. He cannot bear that the guardians should have no private property. They hold the state in their hands, yet not one of them is to call anything his own. How is happiness possible in such a case? To this Socrates replies that in forming our ideal state we are not to think of the happiness of a part—even of the highest part—but of the welfare of the whole. And yet it may be that the true happiness of the part also may thus be best consulted.

2. The idealizing process advances. What is at first described as a standing army is transformed into a deliberative and executive government, watching over the welfare of the community, whose willing obedience would seem to give the rulers little to do. For the state as a whole is to be

virtuous, and this implies the perfect compliance of the industrial population, the unimpeded energy of the whole class of guardians, the absolute wisdom of the rulers. What was at first an aggregation of separate units, has now developed into a harmony of component parts. That the recrudescence of evils will be averted, that the deliberative body will make perfect plans which their administrative subordinates will entirely execute, and to which the subject people will submit without a murmur, is assumed as a consequence of the main principle of a perfect education. To this point, on which all else is supposed to hinge, we shall return in a separate chapter.

When Athens was in her glory, Pericles eulogised the versatility of the average Athenian, his power of acting effectually on the spur of the moment, of rising to all emergencies, and fulfilling the most varied tasks with equal grace. So it was once said of an English statesman that he was equally ready to lead the House of Commons and to command the Channel fleet. Plato had seen the defects of these qualities; he had looked upon the reverse of the shield. The tortoise had beaten the hare in the race for supremacy, and had proved the case, as it appeared, in favour of firm order as against unbridled liberty, impressing thoughtful

minds with the value of that incessant training and that ingrained respect for authority which Pericles encouraged his countrymen to disregard.

Plato also inherited some of the prejudices of an aristocratic house. His contempt for the mechanical arts, his exclusive treatment of the upper classes, his neglect of the navy, are characteristic of the high-born Athenian. In some ways he reacts against these tendencies, but their influence is not to be ignored, and these partly account for the rigidity of his social system when compared with modern ideals. Modern enlightenment tends to obliterate class distinctions, and to make education universally accessible, whereas Plato's constitution presupposes a system of caste. But this is not to be interpreted too literally. He is careful to provide by the way for occasional transitions from lower to higher, and from higher to lower, and the hardness of the lines of demarcation is partly due to the exigencies of literary arrangement. The form of the work requires that one subject should be treated at a time, and hence the different parts of the commonwealth are separated in appearance more than in reality.

But the fact remains that Plato has left almost unconsidered the condition of the industrial classes who form the bulk of his population. A few

scattered hints regarding them may be gathered here and there, but their welfare is absolutely dependent on the wisdom of the rulers and the vigilance of the executive. The cobbler is to stick to his last, and the retail dealer to his booth; the agriculturist only leaves his farm to purchase what he requires for professional use. No one is to make a fortune, none are to be impoverished. But from these and other like considerations, such as the troublesome problem of population, the mounting spirit of the idealist passes to higher things, and it is only when the state is viewed in its decline that they are again confronted. Yet when the tendencies of ancient political speculation are taken into account, instead of wondering at the sharpness of the distinctions, we should rather welcome the admission that a gold or silver child may possibly be born of parents who are themselves composed of brass and iron.

3. One class must rule, another must obey, whether through some hereditary right of conquest or in consequence of internal struggles. It was a postulate of ancient thought that human life must be controlled by some external authority. The speculation in the *Republic* inevitably takes a similar form. But to profit by Plato's views the modern reader must penetrate beneath the form to the spirit which animates the work.

And Plato himself encourages us to this, by the extreme generality of the discussion. Unlike the *Laws*, the *Republic* contains very few regulations in detail. The whole argument turns on principles rather than on rules. If Plato could have imagined a state of humanity in which all men should receive a tincture of philosophy, there is little doubt that he would have rejoiced to contemplate it. Even in the *Republic*, he will not allow "the many" to be run down. Moses said, "Would God all the Lord's people were prophets," and Milton at one time believed that it was so. And we on our part do not relinquish the pious wish that knowledge may be one with power, that true thought may have free scope, and that practical minds may accept the ruling of the thinker. The life, whether of individual or community, that is not guided by wisdom, is anarchic and weak; and the best hope for the world lies in believing that in spite of caprice and selfishness, there is a tide setting towards the true ideal, and that it is possible to reach down to this deeper current, and to be led by it. There is an authority, not visibly embodied, whose divine right makes itself gradually though obscurely felt; there is a nobility, not of birth in the vulgar sense, but yet of nature, which is acknowledged by a sure instinct in other men.

There is an obedience voluntarily yielded to conviction though refused to claims that have not the stamp of reason. There is modest labour directed to a single result, and therefore fruitful, under the guidance of wise thought and the active superintendence which that thought inspires.

To take an example from the progress of modern science. Some natural philosopher discovers the principles of electricity, or the electromagnetic theory of light. The mechanical inventor consequently arrives at a scheme of wireless telegraphy, or the production of rays which penetrate through folds of flesh: and in the third remove the practical mechanician in innumerable instances carries out the principle which one original mind had grasped, and others less original but active and keen had followed into special applications. With less of certainty and amidst continued disputings, something like this may be dimly discerned in the political conduct of progressive communities. There are the practical statesmen who, sooner or later, as opportunity offers, bring the ideas to bear, and there is the multitude of intelligent persons, who at this stage accept the established principle and are willing to act upon it. From Adam Smith or Ricardo, through Cobden and Peel to the British Chambers of Commerce, we have a succession similarly

answering to the rulers, the subordinate guardians, and the mass of citizens. Such is the deeper current, unruffled by the contentious winds that sweep over the surface of society: the tide which must sooner or later carry onward the main of waters. By working with it and not against it, we may hope to hasten that result, for as has been shrewdly observed, no Millennium will ever come unless we make it.

Plato is keenly alive to the dangers arising from the excessive accumulation of wealth as well as to those attending over-population or the reverse. In the *Laws*, where special regulations are enacted to obviate such disasters, allowance is made, within limits, for differences of outward fortune, and the lowest class who have no stake in the country are exempted from the necessity of voting. In leaving them free to vote, it is implied that even the humblest citizen who is sufficiently interested in public affairs to leave his work for the polling-booth, need not be wanting in intelligence and judgment. But in the *Republic*, the industrial population from the farmer down to the shoemaker have no part at all in the government, which acts entirely from above. It is left wholly undetermined on what conditions the industrial classes are to cultivate the land, and under what regulations produce of all kinds is to be distributed. Duties

are to some extent indicated, but the question of rights is nowhere considered.

The world has learned by bitter experience the futility of sweeping revolutionary changes, the impossibility of "a clean state," the gradual means by which alone lasting progress can be effected. We cannot banish all undesirables if we would. Still less will our religion permit of other methods at which Plato hints, by which he would purge the human hive. Nor are we prepared to follow his attempt to embody moral conceptions in hard and fast social regulations. Such notions belonged to the ancient world, to whom the long vista of subsequent history was inconceivable. But, all this notwithstanding, the thoughts of a great mind "on man, on nature, and on human life" in a time of vivid experience, have an imperishable value.

4. No Greek philosopher was fully aware of the truth expressed by Sir James Mackintosh that "constitutions are not made, but grow." They all assumed that as Solon and Lycurgus had given their impress to the Athenian and Spartan constitutions, so the state of the future must have its original legislator, whose laws in their main outline would be eternally binding. They contemplated radical changes to be effected at a bound. "When once a commonwealth is started on right lines," says Plato, "it goes on prospering and to prosper."

Yet with all his confidence of supreme optimism, he is aware of the appalling difficulty of his attempt. There are moments when his mind is clouded with a doubt. Whether the form of state on which his affections are fixed will be realized ages and ages hence, or may possibly exist in some far distant clime, he will not venture to say. And in preparing for the last audacious paradox of the philosopher-king, he reminds his hearers of the immense gap which separates talk from action. He even confesses that the speculation they are engaged in is a sort of game: "I forgot," he says, "that we were only in play." These are passing shadows, yet it is worth while to take note of the places where the absoluteness of the main conception is modified. "The framers of the new commonwealth, having taken the 'clean state' in hand, will glance repeatedly at the ideal pattern, and then look down upon the outline which they have drawn. They will paint out and re-touch the picture again and again, until they have hit the exact tone and complexion in which the human most resembles the divine." The conception of a gradual process is there in germ. In his latest writing, evidently the result of much bitter experience and disillusion, the precautions against initial errors are more elaborate still. Selected persons are to travel and bring home ideas, in the light of

which they are to criticise the laws at first laid down; and only after long and anxious consideration is the state to assume its ultimate stereotyped form. A remark in the fourth book of the *Laws* anticipates still more distinctly the truth which modern experience has confirmed. "I was about to observe," says the Athenian stranger, "that legislation is not the work of any human being, but that circumstances and events falling in all manner of ways, are the sources of all our legislation. The stress of war, the incidence of poverty, plagues, and other disasters oppressing a community for years, compel them to reform their laws. Yet in all this there is room for divine providence and opportunity, and for human wisdom, which may take advantage of both." The optimist of the *Republic* would hardly have made so clear an admission that "time and chance happen to all."

Many incidental observations have reference not to the ideal but to the actual state of the world; such as the distinction between the cases of the physician and the judge. "There is no harm," it is said, "but rather an advantage, when the physician has had experience of physical infirmities. But the judge should have observed criminal proclivities only from outside. He must have a healthy mind, for cynicism is a worse distortion of judgment than simplicity."

5. Plato cannot conceive a state of society without war, or without slavery; but he would reform the usages of war. That Greeks should war with Greeks, and ravage their lands and hang up trophies in Greek temples after such unnatural conquest, is an offence against Hellenic gods. "In warring with barbarians," he says ironically, "let us act as we now do in warring with Hellenes."

The allusions to slavery, on the other hand, are slight and indistinct. Greeks are not to enslave their own countrymen, but it seems to be understood that the industrial classes, at least, would have their domestic slaves; and in Book VIII. he refers to the danger consequent on the isolation of a household which is only counteracted by a virtual federation of the masters. In this he touches upon the fringe of a subject which is treated more fully in the *Laws*. There it is admitted that the slave is indeed a difficult possession. He is a chattel and yet a human being. He must be treated as a child, with undeviating firmness but also with kindness. Familiarity, especially with women slaves, is carefully to be avoided. At the same time, scrupulous fairness towards them is to be observed. There is no greater test of a sincere love of justice than the manner in which men treat those who

are in their power. This principle applies to a positions of authority, but above all to the relation of master and slave. "The difficulty is greatest," says the Athenian stranger, where both are Greeks. And it is desirable that the slave should be of a different race, and, if possible, speak a different language. This advantage is casually secured by the provision in the *Republic* above referred to, that Hellenic prisoners of war are never to be reduced to slavery.

REFERENCES, CHAPTER IV.

p. 49. (1) Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, I., i., § 16; *Translation* III., i., p. 5; *Euthydemus*, p. 291 B.
(2) *Laws*, Book IV., p. 714 C.

p. 50. (1) Origin of Society, *Gomperz*, vol. i. (English translation), pp. 392, 393; *Nettleship*, pp. 52-57.
(2) *Theætetus*, p. 176 A.

p. 51. *Republic*, Book III., p. 395 B.

p. 52. *Republic*, Book VIII., p. 556; *Laws*, Book V., p. 744 D E.

p. 59. Infanticide is abandoned in *Timæus*, p. 19 A; and *Nettleship*, p. 174, questions it altogether.

p. 60. (1) *Republic*, Book V., pp. 472, 473.
(2) *Republic*, Book VI., p. 501 A B; *Laws*, Book XII., p. 957, compared with Book IV., p. 709 A.

p. 62. *Laws*, Book VI., p. 777 B.

CHAPTER V

EDUCATION

1. EDUCATION is according to Plato the pivot article of a standing or falling commonwealth. It is the living spring from which all other modes of well-doing are derived, and so long as it is steadily maintained on the right principles, political and moral health cannot be impaired.

"The regulations which we are prescribing, my good Adeimantus, are not as might be supposed a number of great principles, but trifles all, if care be taken, as the saying is, of the one great thing. . . ."

"What may that be?" he asked.

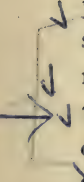
"Education, I said, and nurture. If our citizens are well educated and grow into sensible men, they will easily see their way through all these as well as other matters which I omit."

Hence educational theory occupies about one-third of the whole dialogue. But what was said above about the separate treatment of the two classes of guardians is applicable also here. The

subject is treated in compartments, which, if the scheme were put in practice, would be found to overlap. And as the industrial classes are left almost out of sight, the discussion is practically confined to the training of the rulers and their subordinates, who are a minority in the state. But it is from this discussion, taken as a whole, that Plato's general views of elementary and higher education are to be inferred.

From hints dropped here and there about the people at large, it would appear that their education, if so it might be called, was to be purely "technical." The children of the agriculturist or of the artizan would be trained simply and solely in the practice of their father's occupation. The cobbler's son would be educated in cobbling. We are reminded of the institution of apprenticeship as it once existed in modern Europe. The youth so instructed would no doubt be brought up in habits of obedience, and in the observance of religious duties. He would be made to feel that he was not merely a cobbler, but a citizen. Nor only so; for if the higher principles which are developed in the education of the rulers were consistently applied throughout, it would be seen that the "idea of good" is to be realized in all production. The carpenter makes a bed, as we are told in Book X., according to an ideal pattern which is of divine

ordaining. The builder must have some tincture of mathematical notions, if he is to use aright his ordinary rule and square. It follows that even if technical education were all in all, scientific principles must enter, although indirectly, into the training of the artizan. But the artizan is not therefore to pride himself on the knowledge of principles. The mechanician who poses as a philosopher is like an escaped convict taking sanctuary in a temple. Education, then, may be roughly divided into practical, moral, and intellectual :—the training of hand and eye, the formation of habits, the development of thought. The last of these departments is not exclusive of the other two. For every guardian, whether ruler or not, has been trained in the practice of his profession as a soldier and no one is selected for the highest education until the moral and political principles ingrained by authority and discipline have been tested (through pleasure, pain, and fear) and found not wanting. Moreover, the benefits of the highest education are more widely diffused than appears at the first glance. For the prospective rulers are chosen from a much larger number, and it may be inferred that many are allowed to pass through the preparatory standards who are rejected before they reach the highest stage. Arithmetic, for example is only mentioned as a subject of the higher educa-



tion; but it is implied that the teaching of arithmetic is commenced in childhood; and in the *Laws* accordingly we find a sort of Kindergarten method for teaching children to count and calculate, by making use of apples and garlands to represent the units. Hence we are not to divide too sharply between elementary and secondary education. The early training has, in fact, two sides to it: one moral, the other intellectual.

In the *Republic*, mental precedes physical culture. The mind is regarded as receptive before the development of bodily activity. Moral instruction cannot begin too early. The youngest child delights in hearing stories, and the tales are to be carefully chosen with a view to the impression which they convey. No matter how fictitious, they must embody principles of truth. Plato afterwards realized that physical culture cannot be begun too soon; but in the *Republic*, where he is contemplating the Spartan model, and is determined on the selection of the fittest, there is only a casual allusion to the nurse's duty of moulding the infant limbs.

2. In the earlier stage of education the moral element predominates, and Plato is thus led to his famous criticism of Greek mythology and its poetical exponents, especially Homer and Hesiod. In this he follows the examples of

Xenophanes and Heraclitus. He had elsewhere recognised the value of the existing methods:—the work of the choir-master, who attended to the manners of the children while he trained the voice and ear; of the form-master, who set them to learn by heart long passages from the best poets; and of the writing-master, whose copies were calculated to produce a moral effect. He allowed Protagoras to plead for these established customs as making for civic virtue. The Socrates of that early Dialogue does not complain of the method but of its result, while he desiderates what he cannot find,—a scientific teacher of morality. But Plato is now inspired with his own positive conception of the moral ideal, and while admitting the wisdom of immemorial tradition in prescribing music (including literature) as the vehicle, he insists on recasting both the substance and the form in accordance with his own more refined conceptions. Already in the *Euthyphro*, his Socrates has confessed that he could not accept the current fables, which attributed immorality to the gods. It is there suggested that such an opinion had much to do with his martyrdom. That hint makes more impressive the boldness of the rules about theology which are here laid down. All talk about the gods must be consistent with the true idea

of the divine nature, and also such as to give a purely ethical direction to the minds of the young. It must never be implied, for example, that God is the author of evil; or that He in any way, by word or action, deceives mankind. All good that is really good proceeds from Him, and if at any time He inflicts suffering upon mankind, it is of the nature of chastisement, and issues in ultimate benefit to the sufferer. Nor are children to be frightened with tales about the world of the dead, which make death appear a terrible thing. Such fables are both false and injurious, striking at the very root of courage. Plato has been accused of inconsistency, because while deprecating the traditional horror of the unseen, he has himself drawn in Book X. so vivid a picture of the sufferings of the wicked, corresponding to previous sketches in the *Gorgias* and *Phædo.* This supposed discrepancy has even been made a ground for the hypothesis that Books I.-IV. had been written at some earlier time. But such criticism ignores the essential difference of motive between the passages in question. In Book III. he seeks to obviate the fear of death, which is unworthy of a freeman. In Book X. his aim is to impress every soul of man with the fear of sin. The supposed contradiction is therefore merely superficial.

3. The pupils in Plato's preparatory school are also to be taught veracity—not an inborn virtue in the mind of a Greek. God, it was said above, is true, or rather truth itself, and cannot lie; but in the human sphere there are two modes of falsehood, both of which are to be forbidden to the young. The lie in the soul is to be utterly abhorred by all who hope to have a share of virtue. But there are cases in which falsehood in word is inevitable under the conditions of human life. The exact and literal truth cannot be told to a madman, or to a designing enemy. But such falsehood, though less abominable than the other, can only be permitted to persons in authority. The young are to be brought up in utter hatred of all lies.

The "lie in the soul" in Plato's paradox nearly answers to Aristotle's absolute ignorance, or ignorance of principle, which he refuses to admit as an excuse for vice. Both ultimately rest on the Socratic view, which identified knowledge and virtue. Such ignorance is in modern language the entire absence of a moral principle.

Again, the young are to be taught subordination, and for this end many passages of Homer must be discarded. Achilles, though the Spartans worshipped him, was by no means a pattern of Spartan discipline. The son of a goddess must

not be described as insulting his chief, nor as indulging in the pleasures of the table; nor are the excessive lamentations of heroic men to be recited in the hearing of our pupils. All extremes, whether of grief or laughter, are to be avoided by them. These and the like rules all make for temperance, sobriety, and fortitude.

Plato is not contented with remodelling the matters taught, the substance of what is to be conveyed in words. The style and manner of expression must be reformed likewise. As entire unity both of the whole and of each individual part is the chief note of the ideal state, so the form both of language and melody, of prose and verse, of poetry and song, is to be stamped with directness and simplicity. The fables as now remodelled are to be told, not acted. Narration is to be preferred to imitation. Dramatic representation is inconsistent with the main principle that one man is not to play many parts. All effort is to be concentrated, not dissipated, and the emotions are not to be excited, but rather repressed. The very charm of tragedy constitutes its danger. So in the sister art of music, which is the handmaid of poetry, the softer and more pathetic tunes are to be discarded. Two sorts alone are to be retained: one brave and spirit-stirring, one calm

and resolute. The Dorian mood is to be adopted, not the Lydian or the Ionian.

All arts and crafts in which production is capable of beauty are to be similarly reformed. In everything that meets both eye and ear there must be a wholesome influence instinct with the true ideal of virtue. The young are to grow up as in a garden-ground where the plants are nourished by pure air, and all that is noxious and encumbering is weeded away. Thus surrounded from their earliest years with shapes that are embodiments of reason, they will recognise the truths of reason when at last revealed to them, and embrace them and mould their lives accordingly.

What is chiefly emphasized here, is the importance of early impressions, and the wisdom of so directing education that the pupil may have as little as possible to unlearn. That an education through perfect circumstances is impossible, and that were it possible, it would leave the mind so educated unarmed against the assaults of evil, is not so much forgotten as for the time ignored.

Plato might reply, that experience will come soon enough, and that the best efforts of the teacher can only suggest a standard by which the facts of life may afterwards be truly estimated. Still a serious question remains behind. May not

an education through perfect circumstances tend to the gradual extinction of spontaneous effort? (see Chapter XI.)

4. Physical education, though beginning later, is to be continued side by side with the moral. Here, likewise, a Spartan severity is observable, but with the important difference that, while the training of the Greek athlete was for the sake of bodily achievement and often resulted in dulness and inertness of mind, that of the guardians of Plato's commonwealth aimed at producing the mental characteristics of courage and self-control. That the men are to be warriors is not forgotten, but this consideration is secondary to the formation of character as such. This fine remark, like others which occur in the *Republic*, appears to have been afterwards lost sight of. When the subject of gymnastic is again treated in the *Laws*, this branch of education is regarded simply as a training of the body. Similarly, in Book VI., when enumerating the elements of the philosophic nature, Socrates speaks of justice without any apparent reference to the definition in Book IV.

An incidental observation again indicates the hardness of Plato's temper at this time. He makes a scathing attack on contemporary medicine, which he accuses of encouraging

valetudinarianism. Both in diet and therapeutics, he for once prefers "the good old rule and simple plan" of the Homeric heroes, amongst whom were the sons of Æsculapius. It is curious to observe that some years afterwards, when he wrote the *Timæus*, having probably himself had some experience of illness, he employs nearly the same expression, "the nursing of disease," in recommending the course which he advises to be pursued.

Music and gymnastic, that is to say, mental culture and physical training, are to be so combined as to form the mind of youth to gentleness and courage. Culture when pursued alone, relaxes and softens the mind. Athleticism blunts and hardens it; but by their due admixture and the adaptation of either to its proper end, the whole nature is at once strengthened and harmonized.

The reader may have noticed that in Plato's Kindergarten, there are no lessons in handiwork. This defect, in common with others to be observed hereafter, is due to the aristocratic contempt for mechanical labour which had been for ages ingrained in the mind of the high-born Athenian.

5. Another main purpose of the earlier education is to instil into the minds of youth, and fix indelibly, love of the Fatherland and right opinion as to the

duties of the citizen. The constitution of the state thus affords the link desiderated in the *Meno*, where it is said that right opinions are valuable, but insecure until they are bound fast by Reason. The right opinion of the young and of those guardians who never attain to power is secured by the authority of the rulers who have the Reason in themselves.

It results from the plan of the whole work, that the education of intelligence appears to be reserved for a small minority of the population. But this apparent reservation is not to be taken too strictly, for it is reasonable to presume that those who are chosen from the class of guardians, as being capable of such higher training, are far more numerous than those who ultimately rise to the position of rulers. Individuals who are rejected at any stage have obviously received far more in the way of liberal culture than the mere lessons in music described in Book III. The educated classes thus form a sort of pyramid, which is narrowed by successive steps towards the culminating point. The combination of the higher with the lower education is described in the phrase, λόγος μουσικῇ κεκραμένος, "Reason blent with culture." Those who are to be the subjects of the higher education are selected at an early age, the chief test being their readiness to respond to the

call of duty. "While they are children their mental exercises are to have an element of childish playfulness." It follows that in the case of all of them, the two modes of education, those of habit and intelligence, are to be imagined as proceeding side by side. And it is not to be forgotten, though only thrown out by the way, that part of their practical training consists in learning to ride.

6. Secondary and higher education as we conceive it, was a novelty in Hellenic life. The drill of the grammar and music schools, as described in the *Protagoras* and in the *Clouds of Aristophanes*, where children learned to read and write, and play the lyre and sing in unison, was not calculated of itself to train the understanding or awaken the reasoning powers. Arithmetic, as children are now familiar with it, was not included there, and grammar in the modern sense was a mystery which, to the ordinary schoolmaster, was then unknown. The teaching of the Sophists, disliked and feared by the men of the former generation, gave the nearest approach which then existed to our secondary education. Protagoras first analyzed the parts of speech ; Prodicus discoursed on Greek synonyms ; and the elements of arithmetic and geometry, or of both in one, were being studied by disciples of Pythagoras. What are to-day regarded as rudiments of common knowledge were, not many

the inculcation of right principles through moral discipline is steadily maintained.

(2) That facts of sensible experience are to form part of the training of the young would not be denied by Plato. But his contention is that facts must somehow be presented in the light of principles, else they are devoid of interest, and have no educative power. A good memory is a necessary condition; but merely to load the memory is not to exercise it aright. The mind must be gradually led to grasp by its own activity the laws which the facts exemplify. Plato does not expect the faculty of reason to be called into complete exercise all at once. He only insists that the true educational method should raise the pupil's thoughts stage after stage to take a wider and more comprehensive view of things. The test of natural ability is the power of generalizing; of grouping facts and seeing them in the light of their connecting principles. "He who sees things together is capable of dialectic," he who cannot will never be a dialectician.

(3) These methods must be so applied that increasing insight may be accompanied with delight. The earliest teaching should be a sort of game. This is shown more in detail in the *Laws*, where Plato quotes Egyptian methods of teaching arithmetic to young children. In the

call of duty. "While they are children their mental exercises are to have an element of childish playfulness." It follows that in the case of all of them, the two modes of education, those of habit and intelligence, are to be imagined as proceeding side by side. And it is not to be forgotten, though only thrown out by the way, that part of their practical training consists in learning to ride.

6. Secondary and higher education as we conceive it, was a novelty in Hellenic life. The drill of the grammar and music schools, as described in the *Protagoras* and in the *Clouds of Aristophanes*, where children learned to read and write, and play the lyre and sing in unison, was not calculated of itself to train the understanding or awaken the reasoning powers. Arithmetic, as children are now familiar with it, was not included there, and grammar in the modern sense was a mystery which, to the ordinary schoolmaster, was then unknown. The teaching of the Sophists, disliked and feared by the men of the former generation, gave the nearest approach which then existed to our secondary education. Protagoras first analyzed the parts of speech; Prodicus discoursed on Greek synonyms; and the elements of arithmetic and geometry, or of both in one, were being studied by disciples of Pythagoras. What are to-day regarded as rudiments of common knowledge were, not many

the inculcation of right principles through moral discipline is steadily maintained.

(2) That facts of sensible experience are to form part of the training of the young would not be denied by Plato. But his contention is that facts must somehow be presented in the light of principles, else they are devoid of interest, and have no educative power. A good memory is a necessary condition; but merely to load the memory is not to exercise it aright. The mind must be gradually led to grasp by its own activity the laws which the facts exemplify. Plato does not expect the faculty of reason to be called into complete exercise all at once. He only insists that the true educational method should raise the pupil's thoughts stage after stage to take a wider and more comprehensive view of things. The test of natural ability is the power of generalizing; of grouping facts and seeing them in the light of their connecting principles. "He who sees things together is capable of dialectic," he who cannot will never be a dialectician.

(3) These methods must be so applied that increasing insight may be accompanied with delight. The earliest teaching should be a sort of game. This is shown more in detail in the *Laws*, where Plato quotes Egyptian methods of teaching arithmetic to young children. In the

same connection, it is acutely observed that children when left to themselves are inventive in their play. Meanwhile the elementary education is not left out of sight. Habits of subordination, freedom from irregular desires, determination to do rightly are pre-supposed. And in the individuals selected for the higher training, there is also present intellectual curiosity and willingness to study. They are "not bred so dull but they can learn." Attention being thus secured, it is the teacher's fault if the act of learning is not keenly enjoyed. Plato's remark that no freeman is to be made a slave at school, suggestive as it is, must therefore be taken with some reservation; but that hated lessons are easily forgotten is only too manifest in experience.

(4) The old dispute between the advocates of liberal culture and of useful knowledge, or of general and special education, which is started here by Plato in the *Republic*, is not exhausted yet. That the sciences had their first motive in utility is an obvious fact; that they have their outcome in extensive usefulness, is well known since the time of Bacon. But they have been the more fruitful because they were pursued in Plato's sense, for the satisfaction of pure intellect, and in such a manner as to develop mental energy to the full. "Arithmetic to be of use

in education, must be studied for its own sake and not with a view to shop-keeping." "Geometry has its uses for the land-agent and the tactician, but it must be carried much further if it is to be worthy of the name of science." And the solid geometry which, as Plato says, has such charms for the philosophical mind, owed any progress it had made not to any obvious utility, but to its own delightfulness. That arduous studies should be discarded as useless would have seemed to Plato as gloomy an anticipation as it was to Renan. Similar remarks are made about harmonics and astronomy. But here Plato's passion for abstraction has led him to an incomplete and one-sided view. That no progress could be made in either science without mathematics, was a truth not sufficiently recognised in his time, but that the mere study of problems respecting the abstract laws of matter in motion could make either perfect without patient observation is a notion which has been falsified in the sequel. Kepler's speculations were an indispensable stage in the progress of astronomy, but they would have been fruitless without the work of Tycho Brahe.

(5) In the progressive description of the sciences proceeding from the most abstract to the more concrete, it is implied that the preparatory training of the guardians is to follow the same

order, beginning with arithmetic, and passing through plane and solid geometry to astronomy and harmony, or in other words to the laws of matter in motion. According to this method, if the modern sciences of dynamics, chemistry, physiology, biology, had been at that time developed, the later part of the curriculum would have included these.

Plato here advances two main principles: (*a*) that the subjects taught are to be adapted to the age of the pupil, and (*b*) that the manner of teaching, especially at the earlier age, should be such that the teaching will be accepted with delight, else it cannot obtain a permanent hold. These principles have hardly yet been worked out into their final application.

8. There is a yet higher standard to be passed before attempting to put on the coping-stone and to commence the study of pure philosophy or, in Plato's language, of dialectic. This standard corresponds in a general way to the aim of our University education. When the secondary education has been completed, at about the age of seventeen, there follows a course of athletic training and military drill which does not allow much leisure for intense intellectual labour. But in the twentieth year the studies of the previous years are to be reviewed, and surveyed more

comprehensively in their relation to each other. The nature and degree of their affinities are to be determined. This new and higher subject is what is now recognised as the Connexion or Correlation of the sciences. Mind is rising to a higher grade on the ladder of thought, and is thus gently prepared for the great final effort, after which from the contemplative height where she lays hold of the idea of good, she is to be enabled to look abroad over all time and all existence.

In reserving this highest of all subjects for so advanced an age—no one is to enter on it before thirty—Plato is moved by the alarm which had been awakened in him by the prevalence of logomachy and barren scepticism amongst the youth of his time. No provision of the Republic is more Utopian than this. That young men of nineteen or twenty, whose intellects had been quickened by the most enlightened culture, should be withheld from speculating on first principles, was indeed a pious wish, which the master of the Academy cannot seriously have hoped to realize. He treated the subject more lightly afterwards in the opening passage of the *Philebus*.

Plato is a consistent advocate of culture for culture's sake, of an education which aims not at immediate utility but at getting mind

(*κτήσασθαι νοῦν*). At the same time he holds the assurance in reserve that the soul so trained will in the end be the most useful to the state and the most fit to govern. "When you descend into the cave," the lawgiver is to say to the aspiring youth, "you will be infinitely better qualified than your merely 'practical' neighbours, to judge of the shadows, what they are and from whence they come." Bacon's view that knowledge is power, and yet to be really fruitful must be pursued for its own sake, is conceived in the spirit of the *Republic*. "Atalanta, by stooping to pick up the apple, lost the race." That parable would have appealed to Plato. But on the other hand the "encroaching intellect," again to use Bacon's language, in soaring to such heights of abstraction as Plato does in Book VII. of the *Republic*, overshoots itself and flies beyond the goal. However it might be with him afterwards, he would not at this time have acknowledged the value of the observatory or the laboratory. Still he may help us to distinguish between that induction which is a mere collection of particulars and that which leads to the discovery of a law; between antiquarianism and the critical study of antiquity; between the learning which clogs the mind and that which enlightens; between laborious idleness, and the earnest pursuit of truth.

References, Chapter V.

p. 64. *Republic*, Book IV., pp. 423-425.
p. 65. *Republic*, Book V., p. 456 D; Book VI., p. 495 D (a figure in the manner of Lord Bacon).
p. 67. (1) *Laws*, Book VII., p. 819 B.
(2) *Laws*, Book VII., p. 789.
p. 68. On Xenophanes, see *Gomperz*, vol i. (English translation), p. 156.
p. 70. Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.*, iii. 2.
p. 72. *Nettleship*, pp. 112, 141, 202.
p. 73. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, i. 548; *L'Allegro;* Dryden, *Ode on St Cecilia's Day*.
p. 75. *Meno*, 98 A; *Nettleship*, pp. 80, 306; *Republic*, Book VI., 533 D, 537 C; Book VIII., p. 549 B.
p. 76. (1) *Protagoras*, p. 325.
(2) Aristophanes' *Clouds*, vv. 961-984.
(3) *Nettleship*, pp. 291-3.
p. 77. Compare Heraclitus, πολυμαθίη νόον οὐ διδάσκει.
p. 78. *Theætetus*, pp. 150 ff., 210 B C.
p. 79. ὁ συνοπτικὸς διαλεκτικός, *Republic*, Book VII., p. 537 C; cf. *Sophist*, p. 253 D; *Timæus*, p. 83 C.
p. 81. *Nettleship*, pp. 269, 272.
p. 83. *Philebus*, pp. 15 D-16 A; *Nettleship*, p. 167.

CHAPTER VI

POETRY AND ART

THE almost puritanic severity which is a concomitant of Plato's optimistic theories, arises partly from the abstractedness of his metaphysical point of view. His thought has not yet outgrown the dualism of the *Phædo*, where a sharp dividing line was drawn between sensation, opinion, and emotion on the one hand, and the pure exercise of mind upon the other. Had the philosopher come to conceive clearly the nature of the individual as "the synthesis of the universal and particular," he would have appreciated at its full value the ideal embodiment of sensible impressions in poetry and art. At a later time he was working out a more complete theory of the relation between thought and perception (see Chapter III.), but he never relinquished his proscription of the poets, whom he would either have exiled or placed under impossible restraints.

There were other causes for this persistent

prejudice. One lay in the contrast which continually presented itself between Sparta looked at from a distance and the actual state of contemporary Athens. The poetry of the time appeared adapted to perpetuate those very features in the lives of his countrymen, which Plato earnestly sought to remove; superstition on the one hand, frivolity and unlimited caprice on the other. Poets of commanding genius were no more, and in the consciousness of superiority, he entertained a just contempt for the "poeticules" of his day. The noble art of tragedy had been infected with sophistry and rhetoric, and had degenerated into something showy and unreal. The Dionysiac influence more and more betrayed a character detrimental to social order, and the traditions associated with it were, as Plato saw, the reverse of "political." It is hard for the inflammable southern temperament to find the true mean between license and asceticism. Plato elects to curb and restrain what he despairs of regulating.

It has also been plausibly argued that Plato's condemnation of the poets is due to some reaction against what he felt to be dangerous tendencies in himself. He confesses to the powerful charm which Homer had wielded over him from his childhood, and not to dwell upon the legend of his tearing up some early verses on making

acquaintance with Socrates, the genius which created the *Symposium* and *Phædrus* had a poetic swing and vehemence and a fulness of inspiration not easily to be kept under control. The spirit of the prophet might be subject to the prophet, but what would happen in the case of other gifted Greeks? When he looks abroad and contemplates the need of temperance, fortitude, and justice in a community, he conceives an exaggerated fear of the consequences that may arise from fictitious representations of unreal scenes in which emotional sentiment finds expression and excites corresponding emotion.

True poetry, says Milton, is simple, sensuous, passionate. Plato, in arraigning the art, would not have accepted that as a defence. On the second and third counts she would stand self-condemned, and as for simplicity, that is the very quality which he looks for, and finds wanting. In Book III., he thinks by laying down certain rules, to make poetry innocuous and to reform music, so as to heal and purify the too artificial State. But in Book X. he sees reason for discarding poetry altogether, with the sole exception of hymns to gods and heroes. Even the best of men, he thinks, who have steeled themselves against desire and passion, cannot listen to those sweet strains without losing something of their virtue; the

contagious influence of imaginary sorrow draws tears from eyes unused to melt.

It is singular that Plato, who deliberately began the work of education with fictitious tales, saying boldly that false language must be employed before the true, should not have more distinctly recognised the worth of poetical invention. What is much of his own best work but reason concentrated in the form of feeling; or what are his famous myths but imaginative fictions embodying truths half-realized, and expressing a passionate aspiration towards the unseen? They are but words reflecting notions which are again reflected from divine realities. Are they not therefore "the imitation of an imitation"? The present is one of many cases in which the philosopher's soaring idealism carries him beyond the moderation and sobriety of his own first thoughts.

Yet if we try to bring together the teaching of Books III. and X. with the treatment of cognate subjects in the *Gorgias*, *Symposium*, *Phædrus*, and *Laws*, we perceive that Plato is aiming all the while at an important truth. The cry of Art for Art's sake, or of poetry for poetry's sake, must be frankly admitted in the sense that no artist or poet can produce good work unless he is free and untrammelled in his endeavours to give shape to his conceptions and complete embodiment to his peculiar

ideal. Plato himself admits as much in the *Phædrus*, where the poet who is in his sober senses is said to have no chance. But the moralist also has his rights: he also must be free and untrammelled in judging of artistic products as affecting conduct. He may say without offence upon a calm review, "This work of art has an ennobling, that, a degrading, tendency." "This ministers to harmless amusement, that inspires to effort and exalts the mind." And the philosopher or the unbiassed critic may observe the difference between a poem which, however rhythmical and melodious, is barren and unmeaning, and one which, coming sweetly from nature, is the manifest outflow of the vision and the faculty divine.

In the last two centuries æsthetics have assumed an important place among the subjects of philosophical enquiry. Many volumes on the sublime and beautiful, on the principles of taste, on the relation of the fine arts to each other and to the conduct of life, have striven to give laws to the Poet, the Painter, and the Musician. Sensationalism makes the standard of beauty depend on association. Idealism seeks to fix it by deductive argument. For the pessimist the purpose of emotional poetry is to detach human beings from the will to live, while to the practical materialist art merely affords relaxation and relief from the

serious pursuit of gain. Theory has supplanted theory, fashion succeeded to fashion, new conventions have abolished the old; in some cases it is hard to say whether art or theory has led the way, although the original artist will always be his own lawgiver.

It is not an idle question in what relation poetry is to stand to life. Plato denounced the separation, which had begun before his time, of music from song, and of both from dancing. He would have sympathized with the Presbyterian who could not bear to hear the organ praising God by itself. Are we now to have a further severance, not only of sound from sense and meaning, but of meaning from human experience? A recent writer has invented a subtle distinction between the subject and the substance of a poem; but unless the substance is in some way derived from actual emotion, called forth by things known and felt, from whence in the universe are the pure fountains of poetic utterance to be replenished?

Plato in his devotion to abstract thought regards all sensuous language as an unworthy vehicle. The modern tendency is to prize the vehicle as all in all, and to be indifferent to the idea conveyed. The success of Coleridge's Dream-poem has had too seductive a charm. In either way a wrong is done to the inherent nobleness of Art.

The spheres of morality and the fine arts are separate and yet related to each other. A complete philosophy must comprise the knowledge of both and assign to each its place and function. No moral strength can make a poet, but Plato can hardly be wrong in thinking that grandeur and nobility of conception depend in some way on qualities of the moral nature,—that splendour of imagination is not unconnected with character; yet he is mistaken in thinking that the representation of what is evil must never enter into the composition of a great and wholesome work of art. Tragic pathos, for example, has unquestionably a refining and elevating influence on those who are capable of enjoying it, and the effect of Tragedy turns almost wholly on the contrast between actual evil and possible or actual good. No feeling heart was ever debased by the representation of wickedness in Iago or Macbeth, and the faithfulness of Imogen, the purity of Marina, shine all the brighter for the foulness of the atmosphere surrounding them. But neither Shakespeare nor Homer can have the same danger for us, that Homer may really have had for the majority of Plato's educated contemporaries.

In reading the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*, we accept what is human, and unconsciously discount what claims to be divine and supernatural. To us

they are splendid monuments of great poetry embodying the thoughts and fancies of a distant age. We can admire their grandeur and enjoy their beauty without falling under the domination of an immoral polytheism. But it was otherwise with the average Athenian citizen, who had been taught to think of Homer and Hesiod as providing not only æsthetic enjoyment, but a rule of life, and when this confidence was shaken, had no resource except in moral scepticism or in allegorical interpretations where he "found no end in wandering mazes lost."

Although Greek religion cannot be said to have been embodied in sacred books, yet there is a real analogy between the authority of the old poets in Plato's age, and the confusion of mind arising from the literal application of Scripture amongst the English Puritans or the Boers of South Africa. So much may be said in vindication of Plato's condemnation of Homer.

In respect of metaphysical theory, Plato's own reasoning in the later Dialogues went far towards restoring to the senses and imagination their due place and honour. In the *Philebus*, he even approaches a practical inference in connexion with the useful arts. The builder and carpenter have to do not with the absolute, but with the relatively imperfect, squaror

and circle. The idealizing impulse continued notwithstanding to affect Plato's æsthetic theory, and his experience of the contemporary drama in an age of minor poets, dragging the average Athenian about from theatre to theatre in search of some new thing, which the strolling companies provided in endless variety, the absence of any authoritative standard of taste except the applause or condemnation of clamorous audiences, had disgusted him too deeply to permit of his returning to a just and reasonable view. This is one of the few subjects in which the logical clearness of Aristotle grasped a truth not anticipated by Plato. The *Poetics* are only a fragment, but have had a great and increasing influence upon modern æsthetical theory. Professor Butcher has shown that the Stagyrite comes nearer to the modern view, which makes pleasure the text of excellence in poetry, than most of his successors and imitators, whether in Roman literature, or French, or English.

A word should be added on Plato's attitude towards comedy. At the close of the *Symposium* his Socrates was defending the famous thesis, that a great tragic poet could be a great comic writer as well. In the *Republic* he makes a remark not necessarily inconsistent with the former, that in point of fact the same persons

cannot act well in tragedy and comedy. In allowing his guardians now and then to imitate vicious persons in scornful play, he has been thought to give some opening for comic art. A provision in the *Laws* throws an interesting light upon this point, where it is enacted that the citizens may not take part in comic scenes themselves, but may sometimes witness them when the characters are impersonated by slaves.

A good deal has been written lately about Greek music. The discovery of some genuine fragments has thrown light upon the technical discussions of Aristoxenus (third century B.C.) and Aristides (first century A.D.). The subject is too complicated for explanation here. But it is still difficult to account for the extraordinary importance attached by Aristotle as well as by Plato to the moral influence for good or evil of different musical modes. The statement of Glaucon, as to the subtle effect of some change of fashion in melody insinuating itself into personal conduct, undermining the home, and sapping the constitution of the state, is to the modern mind hardly intelligible. The saying of Fletcher of Saltoun, "Let me make the ballads of a people, and I care not who makes their laws," is often quoted, but little believed. The passion associated with the "Marseillaise," or

with "Rule Britannia," is an effect much more than a cause. We are familiar with the sadness of the minor key, but no one imagines that such a setting of familiar tunes has a weakening effect on character. We can only suppose that the Greek temperament must have been strangely responsive to melodious sounds, whether gay or pensive. The difficulty is not lessened by the theory which is advanced on high authority, that the difference between the scales, which are admitted and rejected on moral grounds, lay merely in a higher or lower pitch. We hardly seem to have advanced beyond the position of Milton, who in his youthful poem asks the spirit of mirth to lap him in soft Lydian airs, and in the work of his maturity represents the phalanx of warriors as marching to the Dorian mood.

Yet it must be admitted by those who still are "moved with concord of sweet sounds," that at the close of some strain of music by a great composer, they have been conscious of a moral influence for good or ill. A symphony of Beethoven's leaves the mind composed and calm, whereas in rising from the enjoyment of some of "the music of the future," we are aware that our emotions have been excited, and not allayed.

The imaginative sympathy with all that affects man as man, which is of the essence of true poetry,

and the sensitiveness to beauty which forms the inspiration of Art, may often co-exist with moral weakness, or with vicious proclivities. It may even lessen the flow of spontaneous human kindness by spending on imaginary sorrows what is due to the real. The history of the Italian Renaissance affords many examples of this truth. But there is no reason in the nature of things to justify the famous saying that "Art is the bloom upon decay." Sanity is an essential note of the highest genius, and if a sound basis of character and moral purpose is pre-supposed, poetic imagination and the artistic faculty cannot fail to enhance the worth of personality. They enlarge the sphere of consciousness, they quicken perception, they lift the veil between human hearts that hides them from each other. As Tennyson phrased it in one of his earliest lyrics, the true poet is endowed with "the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn, the love of love." Even Momus, as Plato might say, can hardly object to the genuine fruits of such an endowment.

REFERENCES, CHAPTER VI.

p. 86. *Laws*, Book VII., p. 816 ff.
p. 87. *Gomperz*, vol. ii. (German edition), p. 401.
p. 89. *Gorgias*, p. 502; *Phædrus*, pp. 268, 269; *Laws*, Book III., pp. 700, 701.
p. 90. *Phædrus*, p. 245 A.

p. 90. Burke on the Sublime and Beautiful; Alison on Taste; Lessing's *Laocoön;* Hegel's *Æsthetik;* Schopenhauer, Pater, Bernard Bosanquet.

p. 91. Coleridge's *Kubla Khan.*

p. 93. (1) On Homer as an educator, see *Republic* X., p. 606 E; *Nettleship*, p. 341.

(2) *Philebus*, p. 62 A-C.

p. 94. See, however, *Laws*, Book II., p. 658 E.

p. 95. *Nettleship*, pp. 118 ff.

CHAPTER VII

PLATO'S COMMUNISM.—THE POSITION OF WOMEN

1. PLATO was deeply impressed with the social and political evils which threatened Athens in his time. The spirit of faction prevailing over patriotism, the rich plebeian lording it over the highborn poor man, quarrels and offences due to private interests that overbore the sense of common good, the decay of public spirit, the greed of gain, all these he traced to the defects inherent in family life. He is determined that in his ideal commonwealth, amongst the rulers, at least, all such temptations shall be removed. Natural affection is to remain unimpaired, but is no longer to be restricted within the limits of a single household. He imagines that this end will be secured by his strange proposal of what an American imitator (conscious or unconscious) has called "complex marriage."

Plato is by no means insensible to the moral beauty of a pure and well-regulated home. His

picture of the house of Cephalus at the opening of the *Republic*, and of the old man's care for his grown-up sons, the gentle badinage of Lysis, about his obedience to his mother, the earnest enforcement of filial duties in the *Laws*, show that he was quite alive to the charms of domesticity. Had he lived two generations earlier, he would probably have shared the deep reverence of the great tragedians for the religion of the hearth. But the Athenian home of the fourth century was not always a beautiful thing. At its best it must have resembled the sort of "doll's house" described by Xenophon in his *Œconomicus*. What it was at its worst we may infer from certain pages in Aristophanes. "The Athenian woman was in no way the equal of her husband, she was not the entertainer of his guests or the mistress of his house, but only his housekeeper and the mother of his children" (Jowett).

The example of Lacedæmon was again a snare to Plato. The institution of marriage amongst the Spartan aristocracy was laxly observed. Not that the bond had been loosened, but it had never been very strictly drawn; and the state in controlling such relations aimed principally at the preservation of the warlike breed.

More certainly and obviously he is once more imposed upon by his passion for abstract unity.

Since the actual state is broken up and divided through private interests, he is determined to abolish private interests altogether. The state must be one throughout, there must not be many masters; the principle is virtually admitted that there may be many members in one body, but the emphasis is unduly laid on "one."

It should be remembered first that the new regulations applied only to the guardians, who were a small minority in the community. The ordinary citizens of the industrial and commercial classes were to have their separate households, buying and selling, marrying and giving in marriage; only not having families beyond their means, "for fear of poverty or war." Secondly, Plato's intention is the very reverse of any encouragement of license. It is rather, as Mr Grote quaintly expressed it, "to minimize the influence of Aphrodite." Sexual impulses were to be kept under as they had never been in any Hellenic community, unless perhaps among the Pythagorean brotherhood. The race must be continued (always with due regard to the dictates of the mysterious "number of the State"); the purity of the breed must be preserved; natural desires must have their legitimate scope and outlet; therefore there must be marriage festivals, as carefully provided for in Book V. But all this is done under severe

and solemn regulations. Modern revolutionists in setting up new moralities or pleading for the "higher law" have sometimes imagined themselves to be followers of Plato. But it may safely be affirmed that neither the poetical Shelley nor the philosophic Godwin would have submitted to Plato's institution for a year. Sentiment, in the modern sense of the word, is of course out of the question. It had little place in Hellenic life at all, and the last thing in Plato's thoughts is to encourage it. He is aware that "juxtaposition" must give rise to mutual attraction between young persons, and he makes this the starting-point for his reasoning on the subject.

The experience of twenty-three centuries since Plato wrote has confirmed the estimate of the Greek tragedians regarding the sacredness of the domestic bond, and has justified Aristotle in treating the family as the irreducible unit in the constitution of a nation. And although Christianity, in its first beginnings, like other revolutionary forces, tended in some ways to break through family ties—"My mother and my brethren are those that hear the word and do it"—yet in the long run, notwithstanding periods of asceticism, the Christian graces, exemplifying the precepts of the divine founder, have deepened and purified home affections and have raised traditional obligations

into a law of the spirit of life. That aberrations and deflexions have been frequent in Christian communities, that rash bonds have brought forth bitterness, that the yoke as rigidly imposed has pressed heavily in particular instances, is only too sadly true. But modern attempts to remedy such anomalies by new institutions somewhat after Plato's model, have rarely survived a generation, and then only under the predominant influence of some commanding personality, as in the American "Perfectionist" community of Oneida established by John Humphreys Noyes. Such movements have been inevitably overborne by the legal and moral pressure from the surrounding world.

The objection of Aristotle, that if affection were so widely distributed it would be watered down, is not quite in point, perhaps, for Plato, in destroying the exclusiveness of personal attachments, would not be disinclined to lessen their intensity; but it is certainly true. The professed universal philanthropist is apt to care little for the things of his own house.

Plato, however, might be quoted against himself. He says elsewhere, in speaking of the education of childhood, that a building whose foundation has been neglected, is sure to fall. The family is the school of the affections, and on this foundation the whole structure of wider sympathy reposes. Plato

in overleaping the first step, attempts to raise his fabric in the air. That he was wrong in this requires no further demonstration.

But while rejecting the means proposed, it is still worth while to consider the purpose which the philosopher had in view. He would lift the feeling of common nationality into a sense of brotherhood as instinctive as the natural affection of kindred. He would extend the loving-kindness hitherto associated with blood relationship to every member of the community. May not the same end be more effectually attained by spreading far and wide the warmth first kindled at the family hearth? Have we not known persons whose home affections were fresh and unattainted, yet whose love seemed to be diffused in undiminished fullness towards all with whom they had to do? Are not such persons the cement of our society? Can we not, without unduly straining optimism, imagine them multiplied? Human sympathies need not be straitened within the narrow limits of a single household, but may extend to all who share the common life. And those whose capability of loving has been balked or frustrated, may find a world of consolation in giving more than they receive. But all such activities are quickened by the memories of home: the life is richer in proportion to the vitality at root; just as the soldier in devoting himself to his

country is said to be "more brave for this, that he has much to love."

Ideal for ideal, dream for dream! "Once upon a time," we will say, "in a region far beyond our ken, the institution of monogamy was perfected. Education had been so developed that each individual had been fitted for an occupation suitable to his nature and conducing to the public good. This absorbed his lifelong energies, and to this he was devoted heart and soul. For labour, intellectual and manual, was so distributed as to provide ample room for the willing efforts of all, and to ensure to each a modest sufficiency. The flush of passion in youth was allayed by early and well-assorted life-unions, which inspired fresh motive and impulse to continued exertion. In those peaceful homes warm affection and mutual trust were so firmly welded as to preclude the possibility of jealousy or suspicion. A great and unexampled religious revival, on a Christian basis, had rendered all sexual offences the object of a natural horror equal to that which had previously made incest an unheard-of thing. But the pure love that was generated in the family circle spread far beyond it, until all within the social range were drawn together by affection like that of brother and sister, father and child; while many who remained unmarried, or had suffered early bereave-

ment, found scope amongst those remaining near to them and in society at large for abundant outgoings of benevolent and beneficent activity. Through such persistent endeavours the community had become united in one strong and harmonious whole, and even the head-workers and the hand-workers had come to understand each other and to recognize the interdependence of their several labours."

Such an Utopia is not more remote from sober actuality than was Plato's Republic in his day; and the result, were it once realized, would be infinitely more rich in good. Then some conventional obstacles which a wise prudence has interposed between man and woman and between youth and maid might be discarded as no longer needful, and human intercourse might flow onward at high levels, in a full, clear, and beneficent stream.

Thus while prizing married life as the indispensable basis of all social good, we may learn from Plato not to look on marriage as a sort of dual selfishness. He would pass at once from centre to circumference. We would gradually diffuse the light and warmth from many centres over the whole area. As the centres multiply, the warmth should grow, and if the light but increase correspondingly, then "behold the day!" The feelings which are naturally called forth in

family life need not be arrested there, but the heart so disciplined may be further enlarged to embrace humanity. And there may be single lives independently devoted to the general good, not in consequence of some rash vow, but through a combination of choice and circumstance, perhaps after some sore trial. Affections that have been awakened and frustrated may be transfused, so as to become more largely fruitful. The disappointed one may "scatter blessings o'er a smiling land;" mysterious words of Scripture may be realized: "let not the eunuch say I am a dry tree,"—"the barren woman shall keep house, and be a joyful mother of children."

The widening gradation described by the Mantinean prophetess in Plato's Banquet—from fair bodies to fair souls, fair thoughts, fair acts, and so onward to the ocean of beauty — need not presuppose the dereliction of the narrower sphere, which is the support and ground of the larger.

> "Thrice blest whose loves in higher" (let us add in wider)
> "love endure."

In certain public institutions, where celibacy was at one time obligatory, it used to be an occasion of complaint that the unmarried "don" was apt to rust and vegetate, and to lose all sympathy

and influence over others. The poet even phrased it in measured words,—

> "The slow mechanic pacings to and fro,
> "The set grey life, and apathetic end."

We now hear the opposite complaint—that the married tutor shrinks into a hide-bound conservatism: enthusiasm for progress and reform would endanger his domestic interests: he cannot afford to be public-spirited. "The cares of this world" have choked the good seed in him and he "becomes unfruitful." But surely, in either case, as the aged Cephalus puts it, "the fault is not in the circumstances but in the men," and, in the latter case, also of the women.

2. If that great work, Aristotle's *History of Political Constitutions*, had come down to us entire, and if all of it were on the scale of the lately discovered *Athenian Constitution*, we should know more clearly than is possible now to what extent Plato's scheme of the community of goods is original. We know that in Hellas generally, the rights of property were less firmly established than in modern states. "Revolution" always spelt "redistribution of the land, and the extinction of debts." "Primitive society offered many examples of land held in common, either by a tribe or by a township, and such may probably

have been the original form of landed tenure. Ancient legislators had invented various modes of dividing and preserving the divisions of land among the citizens; according to Aristotle, there were nations who held the land in common, and divided the produce, and there were others who divided the land and stored the produce in common" (Jowett). The analogy of the monastic orders and other mediæval conventual societies to the common property of the *Republic* and the common meals of *Republic* and *Laws*, has often been pointed out.

The details of the scheme which Plato intended are not clear, because the position of the lower classes is left out of sight. They were to have separate households, and possession of real property, but it would appear that the land belonged to the State, although the rulers were to reap no advantage from it beyond bare maintenance. The objection of Aristotle that motives for exertion would be taken away, hardly applies to Plato's highest class as he conceives it. The practical solution which the Stagyrite expressed in the memorable phrase, "property should be private in possession but public in use," is not original in him, for it is Plato's own concession to the weakness of human nature, when devising his second best commonwealth in the *Laws*.

As is usual with him in criticizing Plato, Aristotle is guilty of *ignoratio elenchi:* leaving out of sight his author's point of view. He says that there will be no motive for exertion when property is abolished, an obviously valid objection, if the principle of "all things common" were extended to the whole state. But the rulers have been selected, trained, and tested in such a way as to make sure that no motive can be stronger with them than the general good; and the rest of the guardians are known to have honour for their guiding principle. Viewed in the light of experience, this conception is not altogether utopian. It would not be difficult to name persons, "now with God," whom we have seen and known, in whose lives the former motive was predominant; and with the second, the pursuit of honour, names even to-day in all men's mouths ought to have made us familiar. And as for the love of gain, which Aristotle and political economists assume to be the only stimulus to endeavour, Plato, even in the *Republic*, admits the lawfulness of some of the desires, not only as "necessary," but as approved by reason, and sanctioned by wisdom. The "Kings" themselves are not wholly unacquainted with these.

Plato leaves it to his guardians to keep a strict watch against undue accumulation, and also to

prevent the impoverishment of any citizen. He does not specify the means by which he proposes to obviate the former evil, but in Book VIII. he incidentally suggests two ways of checking the danger of financial ruin—(1) by strict regulations as to the investment of trust-money; and (2) by forbidding suretyship—all investments to be made at the sole risk of the investor. It is also implied that there should be a law of entail.

In the *Laws*, where the conditions of life are confessedly less strict than in the *Republic*, the land is divided amongst the 5040 citizens, each cultivating his own allotment for himself and no longer for the State; then all real property is to be registered, and no householder is allowed to possess more than four times the value of his allotment. What would Plato have thought of the Trust and Corner system, or of the fortune of a multi-millionaire?

The problem of the distribution of wealth in the modern world is, however, so different from that in ancient Greece that it is impossible to reason from the one to the other. No government nowadays could impose such conditions of tenure as were enforced in many communities known to Plato and Aristotle. A Greek state, limited in numbers, and based on slavery, offers scarcely any analogy to our democratic peoples. Such a

notion as that of abolishing the middle classes and placing the capitalist at the mercy of the proletariate, could not have entered into the mind of any ancient thinker.

Yet, in forecasting the future of society the considerate study of Plato may not be fruitless. Professor Jowett, in his introduction, has some striking remarks on this subject, from which the following may be quoted: "Property, besides ministering to the enjoyment of the few, may also furnish the means of the highest culture to all, and will be a greater benefit to the public generally, and also more under the control of public authority. There may come a time when the saying, 'Have I not a right to do what I will with my own?' will appear to be a barbarous relic of individualism,—when the possession of a part may be a greater blessing to each and all than the possession of the whole is now to any one."

3. The remaining paradox,—the proposal for the education and employment of women—is fast becoming a truism for the twentieth century A.D. Plato had nothing to guide him here but the athleticism of Spartan women, and such legends as those of the Amazons or of Atalanta's race. That he should so far have emancipated himself from the ideas of his own country and the example of the East, "shows," as Professor Jowett says, "a

wonderful independence of mind." The admission of Glaucon, that although the female sex is on the whole the weaker, "yet many women are in many things superior to many men," hits the exact point. But is Plato right in admitting no characteristic mental differences? Does common language err in esteeming some qualities of mind as masculine, others as feminine? It is freely granted that both may be blended in different proportions, in members of either sex. But if such specific attributes exist, would it be well that either sort should be extinguished? The often-quoted words that

> "Woman is not undeveloped man,
> But diverse,"

cannot be lightly discarded or put aside. A similar opinion is finely expressed in a letter of Thomas Campbell's, written in 1808, at the time when he was meditating *Gertrude of Wyoming:* "The female spirit brightened to perfection is as unlike and different from the male mind as a diamond is unlike gold. It is a great mistake to suppose that making the most of a woman's mind approximates her to the masculine . . . I think it is like the harmony of different colours, or of the same notes in different keys."

The verse in Miss Hutchinson's poem, which

excited so the risibility of Shelley, when his admiration for the "Brown Demon" had as usual turned to scorn,

> "All, all are men, women and all,"

was perhaps a somewhat crude anticipation.

It by no means follows that the so-called emancipation of women, already fruitful in manifold advantages, should be checked, or not encouraged to proceed. Experience will show what limits, what variations, are desirable. Not only normal requirements, but exceptional aptitudes, should have free scope. Things will find their level. Exaggerations will bring about their own remedies, and a future generation will be wiser than ours has been. After giving women equal rights, Plato at last found a peculiar function which he thought exactly suited to them, in the superintendence of conjugal relations between young persons for the first ten years after marriage. It may be thought that such an advisory committee of matrons would be liable to do more harm than good; but however that may be, special duties may still in the future be assigned to women, when the present movement has run to its furthest limit. It may prove in the end, for example, that although some men are excellent nurses, and some women can acquire

skill in surgery, yet, on the whole, many more women are fitted to become a blessing to their generation as accomplished nurses than could ever rise to eminence as successful surgeons.

REFERENCES, CHAPTER VII.

p. 100. *Lysis*, pp. 207 D-209 C.
p. 101. On the number of the state, see *Nettleship*, p. 302.
p. 102. Aristotle's *Eth. Nic.*, viii. 14.
p. 103. *The Oneida Community*, by Allan Eastlake: London, George Medway.
p. 104. *Cf.* Dante Purg., xv. 49 ff.
p. 108. Jowett's Introduction to the *Republic*, vol. iii., pp. clxxxii.-cxciv.
p. 109. (1) *Laws*, Book V., p. 739 E, μὴ κοινῇ γεωργούντων, which implies that in the former commonwealth the land had belonged to the State.
(2) Aristotle's *Politics*, II., p. 5; *Laws*, Book V., p. 740 A; *Nettleship*, pp. 136, 137.
p. 110. *Republic*, Book IX., p. 591 D.
p. 111. *Republic*, Book VIII., p. 556 A B.
p. 112. (1) Jowett's Introduction to the *Republic*, vol. iii., pp. clxxv.-clxxvii.; *Nettleship*, pp. 169, 179, 180.
(2) On the position of women in different countries, see *Laws*, Book V., pp. 805, 806.

CHAPTER VIII

SUPREMACY OF REASON.—THE PHILOSOPHER-KING.—PLEASURE AND GOOD

1. "THERE is no more dreadful sight," said Goethe, "than ignorance in action"; and according to Plato, the spectacle is more terrible in proportion to the capability and energy of the ignorant agent. He maintains that the most vigorous natures when unenlightened, are the most mischievous. This view was a legitimate outcome of the Socratic position, that the expert in any art can alone form an opinion worth having, and that the art of government is the highest and most difficult. Conduct, as regarded by Socrates, was the precise correlative and necessary concomitant of knowledge. But the word "knowledge," when applied to moral action, insensibly acquires a special force, for it comes inevitably to include a condition and attitude of the active powers, as well as of the intellectual faculties. The connotation of the term is thus extended and becomes more compre-

hensive. Hence in preparing to vindicate his paradox that philosophers alone should govern, Plato postulates, as elements of the nature that is capable of receiving true philosophy, not only quickness to know, desire of wisdom, and love of truth, but temperance, liberality, justice, greatness of soul, and in addition to a strong memory, a lofty courage, grace of bearing, and a sense of proportion. In other words, the true philosopher is not only contemplative, but practical; power of command must be united in him with the power of thought. Plato acknowledges the rarity of such a combination, but he contends that where it is not present, there is something wanting, not only for the purpose of right government, but for philosophy itself. Another form of the same difficulty which he puts forward in the *Republic*, and on which he insisted to the last, is the rare co-existence in the same persons of alertness of intellect and the moral attributes which are commonly associated with it, and, at the same time, of solidity of mental constitution, ballast, and staying power. "My son," said Mr Gladstone the elder, "has ability, but not, I fear, stability." This reflection naturally occurs when it becomes necessary to choose the rulers, or rather to select those who are to be educated with a view to their becoming fit to rule. In this connexion also it is evident that moral as

well as intellectual qualities will be required in the philosopher-king. "The gifts which are deemed by us essential rarely grow together: they are mostly found in shreds and patches. Quick intelligence, memory, sagacity, cleverness, and similar qualities are seldom found in the same nature with that force of character, and grandeur of conception, which are conducive to orderliness and quietness and a well-sustained career. Men of genius are carried hither and thither by their impulsiveness, and all steadiness is eliminated from their lives. On the other hand, those steady and unchanging natures on whose firmness one would rather rely, and who in battle stand their ground unmoved by fears, are likewise slow to move when they are confronted with intellectual difficulties. They seem benumbed when there is anything to learn, and yawn and go to sleep over their lessons. Both sets of qualities must be combined in those who are to be thought worthy of the higher education, and ultimately of great office and supreme authority." A very similar remark is made by the mathematician Theodorus, in describing the aptitude of his pupil Theætetus—the embodiment of Plato's ideal of philosophic youth; and as if in despair of finding the contrasted attributes in the same person, Plato in his *Statesman*, and again in the *Laws*, recommends

that those endowed with these diverse gifts should as far as possible be brought together and interwoven in the fabric of the state. In like manner, in place of the philosophic ruler, he suggests that a young and vigorous monarch should choose an accomplished philosopher for his counsellor or vizier.

It is in just accordance with these conceptions that the pretenders who abuse the fair name and title of philosophy are described. They are devoid of magnanimity, they spend their time in verbal controversies, and in abuse of one another. Their keen little legal minds are bent on gain. All this is urged with no less vehemence than the poverty of conception which keeps their intellect moving on the lower plane, competing for the prizes which the populace award to him who shows the greatest quickness in observing the "simultaneity and succession" of the shadows on the wall. They have no intellectual perseverance, and are contented if they can frame a system whose parts have a plausible appearance of consistency.

It is true that the training indicated in Books VI. and VII. is purely intellectual, and if this portion of the Dialogue stood alone, it might appear that when reason had once been awakened into full strength all the other elements of ideal virtue must follow of themselves. But Plato more

than once reminds his readers that in the higher education it is presupposed that the work described in the earlier books has been successful, and that so far as habits are concerned, courage, self-control, and justice have been already thoroughly implanted. Glaucon is allowed to express a desire that the idea of good, the coping-stone of the sciences, and the philosopher's final goal, should be explained to him as clearly as temperance and other virtues have been described in the previous conversation. And when the account of the higher education has been completed, Socrates again remarks on the exceptional powers and capabilities, both of mind and body, that will be required in persons who are to add such intense intellectual toil to the severe exercises exacted of them in their earlier years. Moreover, it is provided that they shall not enter on the advanced study of the sciences in their mutual connexion until they have completed that exhausting course of physical training which is indispensable, not only for their education in courage and soldier-like qualities, but to the calling forth of their active powers to practical effect, and to the acquisition of that bodily strength which will enable them to undergo a lifetime of continuous mental labour. Lastly, in Book IX., the "King" is said to have had experience of the pleasures of gain and honour, as well as

of the delights of learning. So anxious is Plato, as he himself expresses it, to avoid a lame or lop-sided result.

With these provisos, the rulers are of course before all things accomplished in wisdom. Plato's commonwealth is an intellectual aristocracy. Predisposed as he was to emphasize the claims of birth and to contemn the avocations of commerce and industry, experience, added to his master's teaching, had led him to transfer his exclusiveness from birth to wisdom. He would be ready to say with Bacon, "knowledge is power." But the phrase from his lips would have a different meaning. For the power he aimed at was not command over nature, but the secret of guiding and governing human beings rightly. The philosopher having entire control over the springs of action in himself, and framing his life and conduct after the ideal pattern, is alone competent to mould and direct the lives of others.

A slight difference of expression indicates the manner in which here, as elsewhere, Plato's thought gathers force with the development of his argument, and becomes more positive. At the end of Book IV. it was said that it mattered little whether the state had one philosophic ruler or several. In Books V.-VII., however, the rulers are always spoken of in the plural. This mode

of regarding them remains at the opening of Book VIII., but instead of "rulers," they are now denominated "kings," and towards the close of Book IX., in contrast to the tyrannical man, the ideal philosopher is spoken of as "the King." Thus, although an absolute monarchy is nowhere formulated, the notion of aristocracy seems to be gradually modified so as to prepare for such a conception. We are reminded of the theocracy regretted in the *Politicus*, and of the young despot who is desiderated in the *Laws*. And if we look forward a little, we find a hint also of the wise man of the Stoics, who is "lord of himself though not of lands."

Yet Plato's optimism at the time when he wrote the *Republic* had another aspect, more friendly to the people than that which he has elsewhere displayed. Though he cannot imagine them as becoming imbued with philosophic ideas, he refuses to believe that they are irreclaimably averse from philosophy. If they could once see the philosopher as he really is, they would joyfully accept his government. And the false teachers who deceive the people are not so perverse in themselves as blinded by an ignoble ambition. The sophists prophesy falsely, and the demagogues bear rule by their means, and the people love to have it so, but all this would be altered

if the philosophic ruler were once effectually revealed.

The true ruler does not desire to rule. This to the politician must appear the greatest paradox of all. Plato lays great stress upon it, for it is one of the points of his fully developed theory which are anticipated in Book I., and if stripped of its ironical form, the sentence contains an unquestionable truth. Not until thought has slain ambition and the love of country has overborne the love of power and office, does the statesman attain to the height of real success. The image of the elder Chatham, or of Peel, who saved England while incurring the obloquy of former friends, may recur to the mind. "The ideal statesman must not be in love with power, for there will be many rival lovers who will fight him for it." He ought to have been familiar with a larger outlook than is possible for those who only know the dust of the arena. He will then come to office as a duty, and not as winning a prize. When Glaucon doubts whether those who have risen to the contemplation of the idea of good can be induced to descend into the world of actual life, Socrates merely replies that they are just men, and our request is just, for they owe their education to the lawgiver, and will respond to his appeal. But he might have

added, that before they were introduced to the higher training their patriotism and affection for their city had been tried to the utmost and not found wanting. This love of country will not permit them to refuse the service by which their country may be saved.

2. In Book VI. Socrates expresses a pious horror at the thought that pleasure should in any way be identified with the good. But in Book IX. it is proved that the pleasure of the king is greatest. There is here an apparent discrepancy, which runs through Plato's whole treatment of the relation of pleasure to the higher life. But the inconsistency is superficial, although the subject, even in the *Philebus*, is not quite clearly thought out. In the *Protagoras* the pleasure of the moment is contrasted with a supposed scientific estimate of the greatest amount of pleasure in the long-run. But the emphasis is laid, not on the amount of pleasure, but on the importance of the art of measuring, which is indispensable if that amount is to be secured. When taken out of the ironical Socratic form, the meaning is seen to be, that not pleasure but knowledge is the proper object of pursuit. "Poor human beings, pursue pleasure if you will—that may be the inevitable condition of your being; but know, that you cannot achieve your end until you have acquired the power of true

comparison, by which you can 'forecast the years and find in loss a gain to match.'" In other words, men are advised to renounce pleasure as their immediate aim, and seek after wisdom, with the assurance that the pleasure most worth having will ultimately follow. Long afterwards, in the *Theætetus*, the momentary and permanent are similarly contrasted; the expert in each science is the judge of future pleasure, though it be only the satisfaction of appetite; the cook knows best whether I shall enjoy my dinner or not.

In the *Gorgias*, Plato's idealism has led him into a paradoxical mood, in which pleasure is passionately discarded. But there is a corresponding opposition between wishing and willing, and it is assumed that knowledge is the cure of caprice. In place of the art of measuring, there is here advanced the sense of true proportion, described under the figure of geometry, the science which Callicles has neglected. On this, as on some other questions, the *Republic* presents a moderate and comprehensive view. Pleasure is not one with the highest life, but is inseparable from it. Once more in the *Laws* it is frankly admitted that, considering the frailty of human nature, the Lawgiver would be ill-advised if he did not at the outset exert his gift of persuasive speech to convince mankind that, in following

his precepts, they would find the truest pleasure; that wisdom is the secret of happiness: "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

Certainly the writer of the *Laws* has travelled a long way since he wrote the *Gorgias*, where the art of persuasion was denounced as valueless, and delights were scorned in comparison with laborious days. The only use of rhetoric, it was then ironically said, is to secure conviction and punishment for ourselves and friends when we or they have sinned. Yet the difference of attitude is not a difference of spirit. In the *Gorgias* he was defying the world that had slain Socrates; in the *Laws*, at least a generation later, he has a faint hope of conciliating mankind, to whom he is aware that a life without pleasure would seem to be no life at all. His studies in psychology had also taught him the truth which Aristotle expressed more tersely, that pleasure is the accompaniment and momentary reflex of all vital energy, differing only with the different modes of life. Even in the *Republic* he distinguishes not only between necessary and unnecessary pleasures, but also between those which are honourable and dishonourable. His jealousy of pleasure, as a motive of action, indeed, increased with years: the victory over pleasure is the test and triumph

of virtue. But he does not practically yield to the cynic view, which would rob moral action of its natural reward. He rather asserts that the highest life is accompanied with the highest pleasure, and that the philosopher alone can tell how infinitely more precious is the delight of scientific discovery than that of the lover's conquest, or the glory of a feast. In the *Philebus*, not only the pleasures of knowledge, but the pure pleasures of sense, especially those of colour and smell, are admitted as elements in the composition of the Good. There is no inconsistency, then, in saying that children are to be led to delight in all that makes for virtue, and at the same time asserting that the denial of those pleasures which form temptation is essential to the perfect man.

REFERENCES, CHAPTER VIII.

p. 116. *Cf.* Dante, Purg., xxx. 118 ff.

p. 117. Jowett's Introduction to the *Republic*, vol. iii., p. cxcvii.

p. 118. *Republic*, Book VI., p. 503 C (Jowett's Translation slightly altered).

p. 121. *Nettleship*, p. 96. "His conceptions are never at rest in his hands."

p. 122. "The people good at bottom," see *Nettleship*, p. 204.

p. 125. Jowett's Introduction to the *Republic*, vol. iii., pp. cxliii., cxliv.; *Laws*, Book II., pp. 662, 663.

CHAPTER IX

POLITICAL AND MORAL DECLENSION.—DEMOCRACY AND TYRANNY.—THE IDEAL OF EVIL

THERE is no part of the *Republic* in which Plato's creative imagination is so vividly displayed as in Books VIII. and IX. None is so rich in experience,—and in none is the experience so transfigured and transfused with thought and wit and fancy.

1. In the Dorian type of constitution, or Timocracy, as it is here denominated, true wisdom is overbalanced by ambition. But courage and the love of honour still remain. There is a traditional reverence for age and authority; but while the form of law remains, the power of it is undermined by occult wilfulness. Athleticism dulls the edge of culture. The rulers treat their subjects harshly. Those who were formerly their free and loving providers are now an inferior populace who work under compulsion. The state as a whole is always at war. There is also a

more subtle change, preparing trouble for the future. Through some fault of breeding, elements of brass and iron have got mingled with the gold and silver; and notwithstanding the stability of time-honoured institutions, a secret vein of covetousness is harboured in the high places of the state. The nobles have their separate strongholds and private treasuries where they keep their wives and favourites in forbidden luxury. Having themselves been schooled by force, they are apt to skulk and hide from the law.

Those illicit hoards are the cause of the further change from Timocracy to Oligarchy, or Plutocracy — the government of wealth. The venerable laws which have become honeycombed with secret irregularities are gradually set aside, and the warrior chieftains rival one another in the accumulation of riches. At last they adopt a new constitution, founded not on birth or valour, but on a property qualification. The consequence is, an incompetent magistracy and an ever-widening gulf which separates the rich from the poor. It is a condition fraught with evils, and full of danger. For the two classes into which the commonwealth is now divided are always plotting each against the other, and the official leaders cannot count on being loyally followed in the war.

As wealth increases, extravagance also springs

up and flourishes, and numbers of the upper class are ruined. And as more and more become impoverished, a strange phenomenon is developed, in the multiplication of paupers and criminals,—an ever-growing swarm of "drones," some stingless, but some armed with stings and prepared for any mischief.

The rich men are more and more engrossed with money-grubbing, and affect to be blind to the evils by which they gain immediate profit; till by-and-by the lean and hungry multitude become conscious of their strength. "And often rulers and their subjects may come in one another's way, whether on a journey or on some other occasion of meeting, on a pilgrimage or a march as fellow-soldiers or fellow-sailors; ay, and they may observe the behaviour of each other in the very moment of danger — for where danger is there is no fear that the poor will be despised by the rich—and very likely the wiry, sunburnt, poor man may be placed in battle at the side of a delicate and burly rich man, who has never spoiled his complexion, and has plenty of superfluous flesh. When he sees such an one, puffing and at his wit's end, how can he avoid drawing the conclusion that men like him are only rich because no one has the courage to despoil them? And when the poor men meet in private, will

they not be saying to one another, 'The plutocrats are at our mercy, for they are nothing worth.'" The result is a revolution, in which the proletariate conquers and the state is plunged into democracy.

As Sparta, with her mingled good and evil, stood for the picture of Timocracy, so under the image of Democracy contemporary Athens is satirically described. The satire is good-humoured, but penetrating.

"*Socrates.*—He who has a mind to establish a state as we have been doing, must go to a democracy as he would to a bazaar at which they sell them, and pick out the one that suits him; then when he has made his choice, he may found his state.

"*Glaucon.*—He will be sure to have patterns enough.

"*Socrates.*—And there being no necessity, I said, for you to govern in this state, even if you have the capacity, or to be governed unless you like, or to go to war when the rest go to war, or to be at peace when others are at peace, unless you are so disposed—there being no necessity also, because some law forbids you to hold office or to be a dicast, that you should not hold office or be a dicast, if you have a fancy: is not this a way of life which for the moment is supremely delightful?

"*Glaucon.*—For the moment, yes."

That is the earlier stage, in which the democratic constitution retains something of stability or rather of an unstable equilibrium. But by-and-by, as the lust for freedom grows by what it feeds on, and the intoxicating draughts are ministered in excess, lovers of order are at a discount, and no one is honoured but the professing friend of the people.

"The state would have subjects who are like rulers, and rulers who are like subjects. These are the men after her own heart, whom she praises and honours both in public and private." Then follows a humorous picture of liberty unlimited. "The father grows accustomed to descend to the level of his sons and to fear them, and the son is on a level with his father, he having no respect or reverence for either of his parents; and this is his freedom, and the metic (naturalized foreigner) is equal with the citizen, and the citizen with the metic, and the stranger is quite as good as either."

"Yes," he said, "that is the way."

"And these are not the only evils," I said, "there are several lesser ones. In such a state of society the master fears and flatters his scholars, and the scholars despise their masters and tutors; young and old are all alike; and

the young man is on a level with the old, and is ready to compete with him in word or deed; and the old men condescend to the young, and are full of pleasantry and gaiety; they are loth to be thought morose and authoritative, and therefore they adopt the manners of the young."

He adds that the slave is as free as his master, and that women assert their equality with men; and the description, which is not without reality, ends with an extravagant touch of humour. "The horses and asses have a way of marching along with all the rights and dignities of freemen; and they will run at anybody who comes in their way, if he does not leave the road clear for them." Glaucon replies, and his experience is not singular, that the same thing has often happened to him when walking in the country.

Under the gaily variegated surface of this smiling anarchy, the state is fermenting with the germs of further change. The excess of freedom is preparing for the extreme of servitude. Reaction is an universal law. The "drones" are multiplied in such an atmosphere, and they have lined their cells. The keener and more active spirits amongst them (the drones with stings) assume the part of demagogues, and they are followed by the stingless drones, who deafen the assembly and the law-courts with their clamorous

applause. Between them they occupy the public offices, and fleece the sleek and comfortable citizens, while the small landholders, who form the mass of the people, and might sway the commonwealth if they would, are not quickly roused to political action, and are only too easily prejudiced against the rich, or else bribed to silence by a share of the spoil. The richer men are thus forced against their will to club together. (There is a federation of the capitalists.) Reviled as oligarchs, they become oligarchs indeed. The people are alarmed, and choose a protector, whom they invest with dictatorial powers. The man thus armed attacks some private enemy, and blood-feuds ensue. He then demands a bodyguard, and the people grant it to him, not fearing for themselves, but for their dear defender. At that signal of approaching storm the rich oligarch, if he is to save his life, must flee.

The despot in his first days is full of smiles and promises, and some of his enemies are reconciled to him, but not all: some Hampden or John Selden stands out for law and liberty; proscription follows; the tallest heads are lopped away; all that is most precious is destroyed, and only things vile and refuse remain subject to the accomplished tyrant. Even by these he is hated, and lives in constant danger and suspicion.

He surrounds himself with mercenary troops (the Swiss guard), a worse mischief than the stinging drones, and arms the slaves of his subjects to recruit his body-guard. To feed that motley company, he robs the temples, and at last lays hand upon the goods and persons of the people themselves, who in their simplicity trusted him with power. He is a parricide who does violence to the father who begat him, and to his motherland.

That is the consummation of political disaster. Plato's account of the evolution of tyranny is less inspired by any historical survey than by his anxiety to indicate and summarize existing conditions, and to emphasize the dangers which he perceived in the politics of contemporary Athens. He warns his countrymen that they are in the rapids which lead towards the Niagara of tyranny.

2. In the description of typical individuals corresponding to the imperfect states, there is revealed a tendency analogous to that which found expression in the characters of Theophrastus. Aristotle's picture of the magnanimous man is in a similar vein.

The order of the characterizations, the minute parallelism between individuals and states, and the management of the transitions, is at once

very ingenious and extremely fanciful. But many touches are clearly taken from life. The Spartan character appears in the timocratical man, who is no speaker, but fond of hearing speeches and songs. He is rough with his slaves, a huntsman, and ambitious in war. Like Coriolanus, his pride makes him the victim of popular sycophants and informers, and his son takes warning and flings away ambition; thus descending a step lower in the moral scale, from the love of honour to the pursuit of wealth—for reason has been long since dethroned. With that ignoble aim he keeps his animal passions in control. But they swarm within him, for both high thoughts and honourable ambitions are subdued, and where he has no fear of detection he is ready to rob the fatherless, and defraud the widow. That swarm of low desires, Socrates compares to the "drones" in the state, and in like manner some of them are violent, while some are only base.

This "oligarchical" man in turn begets a son, whom he educates to hold in check the irregular desires, not from any noble motive, but to avoid expense, and to obtain satisfaction for those cravings which are necessary for comfortable life. But the city abounds with rogues and spendthrifts, of whose honied delights the young

man tastes in an evil hour. His lawless passions then are reinforced, and after a struggle in which his father's precepts prove to have little force, because they were not grounded on principles of reason, that empty head is crowded with vain thoughts, which seize upon the citadel of his soul.

> "The state of man,
> Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
> The nature of an insurrection."

The youth then takes up his abode with the "lotus-eaters," from whom he learns to call evil good and good evil, and a period of wild revelry and dissipation follows; but when the storm and stress are somewhat abated he settles down into more respectable ways, still indulging every chance impulse, but in moderation as he conceives, giving the reins to each in turn, and leading a life not of vulgar or slavish passion, but what he deems moderate enjoyment of the pleasures of life. The description is perhaps partly taken from the career of Alcibiades. "He lives from day to day indulging the appetite of the hour, and sometimes he is lapped in drink and strains of the flute. Then he becomes a water-drinker, and tries to get thin. Then he takes a turn at gymnastics, sometimes idling and neglecting everything, then once more

living the life of a philosopher. Often he is busy with politics. He starts to his feet and says and does whatever comes into his head; and if he is emulous of any one who is a warrior, off he is in that direction, or of men of business, once more in that. His life has neither law nor order, and this distracted existence he terms joy, and bliss, and freedom.

In short, he is "not one man, but all men's epitome." This man again begets a son in his likeness, and brings him up in his own ways. But the boy is less fortunate than his father, for instead of ranging himself after his first youth, he becomes possessed with a great master-passion which sways him to his ruin. And when he has spent all and is reduced to dire straits, there is no crime which he will not commit without scruple. He falls into a depth of wickedness and misery beyond description: but there is a lower deep which still awaits him, when others, like himself, taking advantage of the infatuation of a democracy, conspire to set him on the throne of tyranny. Of the tyrannical man-made tyrant, it is said: "He grows worse from having power; he becomes, and is of necessity, more jealous, more faithless, more unjust, more friendless, more impious than he was at first; he is the purveyor and cherisher of every sort of vice; and the

consequence is, that he is supremely miserable, and that he makes everybody else as miserable as himself."

It is impossible to condense into a few words the impressiveness, the exuberance and the ingenuity which Plato has put forth in this representation of the ideal of evil, and of the misery of a passion-ridden soul. One feels that he is terribly in earnest. The pathetic utterance of Macbeth,—

> "The things that should accompany old age,
> As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
> I may not look to have, but in their stead
> Curses not loud but deep,"—

is expanded into a heart-moving tragedy.

The wretchedness of the tyrannical man is finally contrasted with the happiness of the king—that is to say, of the philosopher who is a ruler in the ideal city—and whether such a commonwealth ever comes into existence upon this earth or not, there is an eternal pattern of it in the heavens, after which every wise man will frame his individual life.

REFERENCES, CHAPTER IX.

p. 128. On weak points in the Spartan character, see *Laws*, I., pp. 633 ff.; Aristotle, *Politics*, Book VII., c. 14, VIII., c. 4; *Nettleship*, p. 306.

p. 129. *Republic*, VIII., p. 544 C, *συχνῶν γέμουσα κακῶν πολιτεία* ; 536 C.

p. 130. *Republic*, VIII., p. 556, adopting J. Adam's emendation (which I had hit upon independently), *ἄνδρες ἡμέτεροι· εἰσὶ γὰρ οὐδέν.*

p. 131. *Republic*, VIII., pp. 562, 563.

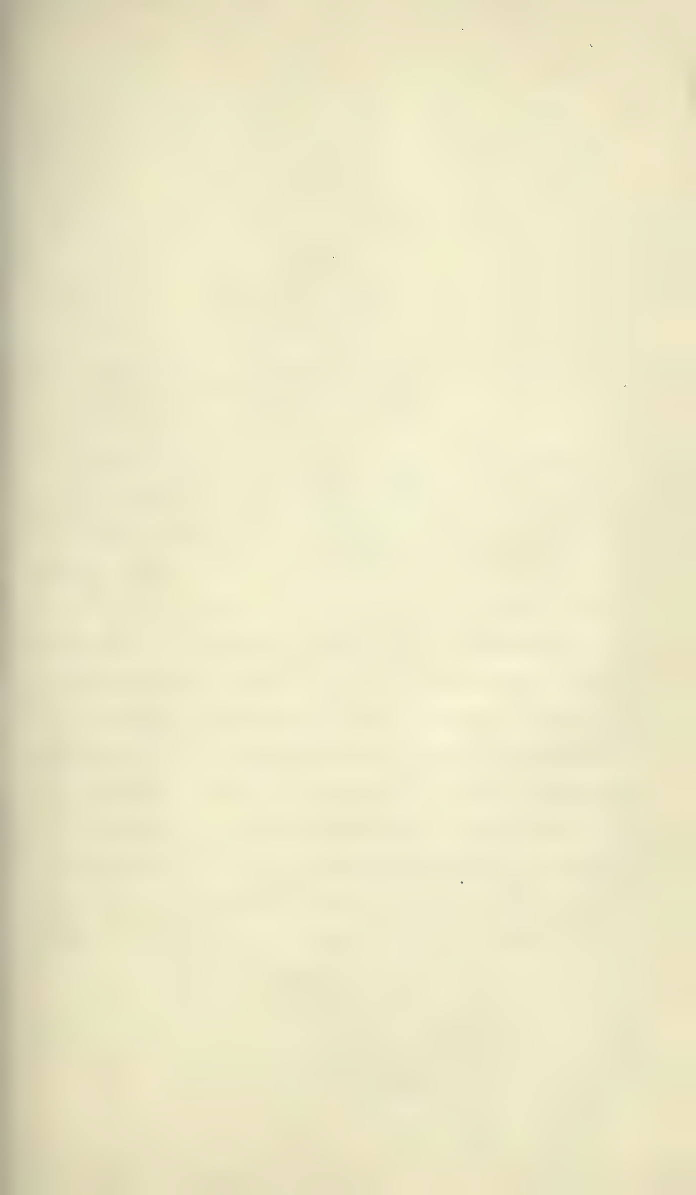
p. 134. *Herodotus*, v. 92 ; Aristotle, *Politics*, V., p. 10.

p. 135. Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.*, Book IV., c. 8.

p. 137. (1) *Republic*, VIII., p. 561 C D.

p. 138. (2) *Republic*, IX., p. 580 A.

p. 139. For the pattern in the Heavens, *cf.* Book VI., p. 500 C.



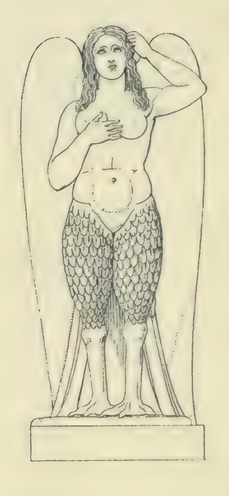


PLATE V.—A SIREN.
(*British Museum.*)

[*To face page* 141.

CHAPTER X

THE SUPRA-MUNDANE ASPECT.—PLATONIC MYTHOLOGY

In Book II. it was said that while God is absolutely true in thought, and word, and deed, some measure of falsehood in words must be permitted to human beings who, to satisfy a laudable desire, invent fables about past things of which the truth is hidden from them. Plato would doubtless have extended this allowance to those fictions of which he is so fond, representing not the past, but those eternal verities which the mind partly apprehends but cannot wholly comprehend. His Socrates, in the immediate prospect of death, discourses of the destiny of the soul in language which he himself describes as mythological. The myth in the *Phædrus*, with the picture of the beatific vision, beheld by the aspiring souls who ride once round the back of heaven, is exceptionally bold; and yet in the later part of the same Dialogue, is said to have been thrown out "in play." The vision of

judgment in the *Gorgias* was introduced by the remark that it is really an argument and not a myth; but there is a reason for this, because Callicles who is to hear it is expected to ridicule the doctrine as an old wives' fable.

The two chief places in the *Republic* where the philosopher has recourse to a similar indulgence of the imagination, are: (1) at the opening of Book VII., where under the image of the prisoners in the den, he illustrates the relation between poor, uneducated human nature, and the world of ideas presided over by the form of good; and (2) at the conclusion of Book X., and of the whole Dialogue, where Socrates repeats the tale of Er, the son of Armenius, who described the vision which his temporarily disembodied spirit had seen.

I do not propose to repeat the substance of these great passages; but merely to offer some remarks which may assist readers of the Dialogue to realize the meaning of particular expressions which are apt to be imperfectly understood. It is hoped that the accompanying illustrations may render my observations more intelligible.

1. *The Fable of the Cave or Den.*

This allegory, which suggested to Bacon his brilliant aphorisms in the *Novum Organum* concerning the *idola*, must be read in connection with the classification of mental faculties and their

objects at the close of Book VI. The method is not unlike that in the passage of the *Phædo* above referred to. There mankind were said to dwell in a deep hollow, filled with a "congregation of" foul and corrosive "vapours," where they were as ignorant of the real earth and sky as frogs at the bottom of a pool. "There are many such 'dim spots,' or misty depressions about the surface of the globe, which, as a whole, is gleaming with ruby, emerald, and sapphire radiance in the light of Heaven. Could the poor indwellers but put their heads above, as fishes leap on the surface of the Bay of Salamis to greet the rising sun, how different would the world appear to them!"

In Book VII. human beings in their unenlightened state are represented as chained in the furthest recess of a deep cavern, with their faces turned away from such glimmerings of daylight as feebly penetrate there. The illustration (Plate VI.) represents a *section* of the cave. The sitting figure must be imagined as riveted and manacled, so as to be unable to move or even turn the head. He is one of an endless line of individuals, each of whom is similarly situated. The shadows at which he gazes are cast by the objects which are carried along by persons hidden behind the parapet or screen, and are thrown, by the light of the fire which is burning, towards the entrance of the cave.

The fire represents the sun, who in Book VI. is said to be the offspring of the Good, and lord of the visible sphere. The images which cast the shadows are natural kinds, created in the likeness of eternal realities and moved by divine powers who are emissaries of the supreme Creator. (Compare the Demiurgi in the *Timæus.*) The shadows, which alone the man can see, are the transient impressions of sensible experience, which the uncultivated mind receives. What, then, is implied in education? There are several stages. First, the fetters are knocked off, and the man is turned about so as to behold the images that are being carried past. They are pointed out to him, and he is asked to name them. That step is analogous to the cross-questioning method of Socrates. Then he is dragged up the rough ascent, until he is brought at length above and beyond the fire into the light of day. He is dazzled at first; but by degrees he gets accustomed to the glare. This process corresponds to the training in the sciences which is preparatory to dialectic or the study of the ideas. This also is a gradual process. The pupil is first taught to look at the reflections in the water, that is, perhaps, to study the ideas through language; then to look steadily at real objects, that is, at the ideas in their abstraction; first singly, then comprehensively (the connection of the sciences).

Then he lifts his eyes to the moon and stars by night (*i.e.*, perhaps, the highest abstractions or categories of being, sameness, difference, unity, etc.); and last of all, he is able to gaze directly at the sun, that is, to contemplate the idea of Good.

No allegory ought to be pressed too hard, and we have found elsewhere that Plato's thought is ever-growing, and refuses to be tied down to a previous statement. Therefore, although the whole passage, as observed above, is an application of the view expressed at the end of Book VI., the parallelism must not be presumed to be precisely exact. It would be misleading, for example, to identify too closely the reflections in the water with the "hypotheses" of Book VI., or the *idola* (the images that are carried past) with the visible symbols of the mathematical sciences. That the objects which cast the shadows and are intermediate between them and the archetypes, are not merely mathematical, is sufficiently proved by an expression in p. 517, where the educated man on returning to the cave is compelled to dispute about the *images* of Justice or the *shadows* of the images, that is to say, the actual institutions of the state or the opinions of his contemporaries concerning them. Here the *images* (idola) of Justice have nothing to do with squares or circles, planes or solids (though the first of these might be a

Pythagorean notion), but are simply the earthly embodiments of the ideal, the fleeting shadows of which are all that the uneducated can apprehend.

Not only are these shadows flitting along the wall of the cave, but there are also faint echoes of the voices proceeding from the unseen beings who bear the images. These echoes only the prisoners hear. This additional circumstance prepares for the introduction of the science of harmony, in regard to which Plato's idealism transcends the speculations alike of the empirics in music and the Pythagorean philosophers themselves. "Heard harmonies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter."

In the fable next to be considered it will appear that the voices of the Sirens, singing all together one melody in one key, for ever accompany the eight revolving spheres.

The height of abstraction which leads Plato to disregard methods of observation in the sciences of Astronomy and Harmony, is nowhere more apparent than in the contemptuous phrase with which he dismisses the so-called philosophy of the prisoners in the den. The brief sentence might almost serve as an abstract of the system, which in modern times has been known as Sensationalism. "If they were in the habit of conferring honours among themselves on those who were

quickest to observe the passing shadows, and to remark which of them went before, and which followed after, and which were together, and who were therefore best able to draw conclusions as to the future, do you think that he would care for such honours and glories, or envy the possessors of them? Would he not say with Homer, "'Better to be the poor servant of a poor master,' and to endure anything, rather than think as they do, and live after their manner?"

Do we not seem to hear the very catch-words, Contiguity, Simultaneity, Succession?

2. *The Vision of Judgment.*

The early commentators declare that Plato borrowed much from Orphic sources, and it is manifest that some parts of his work are coloured by Pythagoreanism. It has also been suggested that the fable now in question was derived from a Zoroastrian origin. Clement of Alexandria even asserted that Er, the son of Armenius, was no other than Zoroaster. But it is still doubtful whether the Platonic elements in the Zend-Avesta have not been introduced at some later time.

It is impossible to determine how much of what may be termed the Platonic mythology may have been suggested by one or another of these several traditions. But one thing is certain: Plato uses these and all his materials with absolute freedom

and originality. Whether he repeats an Orphic, a Pythagorean, or a Zoroastrian fancy, he stands behind it, moulding it anew and making it the vehicle for the expression of his individual thought.

Take, for example, the Pythagorean passages, in which some elaborate manipulation of numerical proportions is made to symbolize a moral or political conception. The number of the State, in Book VIII., has never been explained, and it is not certain that Plato intended it to be intelligible. What he clearly means is to express his conviction that political changes depend on subtle and intricate conditions, the law of which, were it ascertainable, might be expressed in a mathematical formula. But if the philosophic rulers not yet called into being are expected to fail to observe it, through the admixture of sense still clinging to their reason, is it supposable that Socrates could have grasped it, or expressed it completely? Or why should Plato be so careful to tell us that the Muses, in expounding their magnificent theorem, are playing with us in mock earnest and laughing in their sleeves?

The mathematical passage in Book IX., which serves to measure the gulf that separates the king from the tyrant, is put forward as an attempt to express the inexpressible. If the misery of the

tyrant has escaped beyond the reach of calculation, can Plato be serious in finding an expression for it in the cube of nine?

This consideration may suggest an argument against the very ingenious theory which makes the number of the State 12,960,000. Did any ancient arithmetician ever deal with numbers on this scale?

We pass now to the vision of Er. The *Gorgias* and *Phædo*, both earlier than the *Republic*, the *Gorgias* much earlier, have each of them a fabulous description of the judgment of souls; and something may be learned by comparing these two passages with the end of the *Republic*,—not with the futile aim of harmonizing discrepancies, but rather to trace the development of Plato's thought. In the *Gorgias*, as in the *Republic*, the place of judgment is said to be "in the meadow." In our dialogue it has been previously described as a mysterious place, but in the *Gorgias* the meadow is spoken of without preface, and with the article prefixed. May we conclude from this that "the meadow" had been the scene of similar descriptions in an earlier mythology? The *Gorgias* retains other traditional features which are dropped in the *Republic*. The souls from Asia are judged by Æacus, those from Europe by Rhadamanthys, while the Cretan Minos arbitrates as judge of appeal. In the *Republic* there is no

such distinction. May we not suppose that nationality has ceased to have any importance for disembodied souls? And does not this rather support the conjecture that Er, the *Pamphylian*, is Man of all races, or of no particular race?

In the *Gorgias* the place of judgment is said to be at the parting of the ways which lead severally towards Tartarus and the Islands of the Blest. But in the *Republic*, the righteous souls ascend to Heaven through a rift in the sky, and the condemned pass downward to the lower places of the earth—Tartarus, however, as also in the *Phædo* being a special prison-house in the lowest depth, reserved for those whose wickedness is incurable. (In the *Gorgias* the incurables were said to be made a warning to others.) In all this there seems to be an advance from a traditional to a more spiritual view.

We may note some corresponding changes in looking back from the *Republic* to the *Phædo*, where the torments of the wicked are indicated by their being confined to this or that infernal river, Cocytus or Phlegethon, according to their crimes; the worst of all being condemned to everlasting imprisonment in Tartarus; whereas in the *Republic* the horrors of the under-world are left undescribed, but are made more impressive by the groans and lamentations with which the souls returning from

below are said to have recounted them, and the awe with which the returning souls had witnessed the doom of those not destined to return. One other difference between the *Phædo* and *Republic* may be mentioned before leaving the *Phædo*, —though not strictly in place. It is minute, but significant. Socrates speaks, in the *Phædo*, of the genius of Destiny, to whom each soul had been *assigned by lot*. But in the *Republic* it is explicitly proclaimed that the Genius who is to assume the guidance of the soul at birth, is to be chosen by the soul herself. Plato here touches upon the problem which has vexed theologians in modern times—the question of Necessity or Free-will. He allows a limited freedom, and though the limits are extremely narrow, yet he dwells emphatically on the consequent responsibility: "Here, my dear Glaucon, is the supreme peril of our human state, and therefore the utmost care should be taken. Let each one of us leave every other kind of knowledge and seek and follow one thing only, if peradventure he may be able to learn and may find someone who will make him able to learn and discern between good and evil; and so to choose always and everywhere the better life as he has opportunity."

But this is to anticipate; for the choice of lives comes afterwards. We return to Er's narrative. When the just and unjust souls of the lately dead

had been judged and gone to their reward, the returning pilgrims from above and from beneath who were assembled in the meadow continued there for seven days in mutual converse, interchanging their experiences. Then all were marshalled in a throng, and marched to where they saw the pillar of iridescent light that holds together the universal sphere. This shaft seems to be imagined as passing through the centre of the earth, from the upper to the nether pole of the outer Heaven. It is not visible from the habitable part of the globe, and is only reached after a journey of several days. The earth is imagined spherical, as already in the *Phædo*, but Plato has not yet revised the notion of "upward and downward." That is reserved for the *Timæus*. The outer heaven is imagined as fastened together with a chain, the ends of which hang downward from the pole, and to these is affixed by its hook the Spindle of Necessity. The august form of Necessity sits amidst the iridescent light; the spindle turns upon her lap, and the three Fates, who are seated round her on their thrones, are moving it. The spindle's movement is said to be the means of heavenly revolutions. But no mechanical stress or impact is really to be supposed. It would be a mistake so to attempt to explain the passage. The spindle is in fact a sort of orrery, symbolizing the celestial motions, according to the

PLATE VII.—THE THREE FATES. From a Marble Relief (Puteal) in Madrid.

[*To face page* 152.



astronomical theory which Plato accepted at the time. His dynamics, if one may use the expression, are not mechanical, but vital or spiritual, depending on some occult and mysterious, but rational, motive, which gives to the revolutions of the orbs a mathematical regularity. As in the vision of Ezekiel, "the spirit of the living creature is in the wheels." The astronomical fact is referred to a psychical principle of regulated volition.

The shaft of light is probably borrowed from the Pythagorean central fire, round which the earth revolved, turning her face away from it. No revolution of the earth seems to be thought of here. And if she does revolve on her axis in the *Timæus*, it must be very slowly indeed, only so as to account for the precession of the equinoxes. Besides the grand figures of Necessity and the Fates, there are Sirens, one resting on each of the revolving orbits,—

> "That sing, and singing in their glory move,"

—each emitting one note, and making amongst them one melody. Compare Christina Rossetti:

> "Jerusalem makes melody
> For simple joy of heart;
> An organ full of compass she,
> One-tuned through every part."

To this melody the Fates are ever chanting:

Lachesis, of the Past, Clotho, of the Present, Atropos, of the Future.

In the accompanying illustrations, the reader will find, on the left hand, the drawing of an ancient spindle, reproduced from Blümner's *Technologie*. The hook, however, which should have crowned the shaft and which took hold of the wool to be spun, is absent here. The whorl or weight that balanced the motion is seen in profile, but so as to show something of the upper surface, which is decorated with concentric grooves. This form corresponds to the description in the *Republic*. Turning now to the diagram on the right hand, the upper surface of the whorl of Necessity's spindle will be found represented there. The whorl consists of eight circular cups fitting into one another like Chinese boxes. Their edges thus form one smooth face in eight compartments. Beginning from outside, the first and broadest rim represents the starry sphere, the second that of Saturn, the third the sphere of Jupiter, the fourth of Mars, the fifth of Mercury, the sixth of Venus, the seventh of the sun, the eighth of the moon. The little disc within this shows a section of the shaft of the spindle, which pierces through the whorl at this central point. The whole moves from left to right, completing the revolution in a day. But the seven inner boxes are retarded



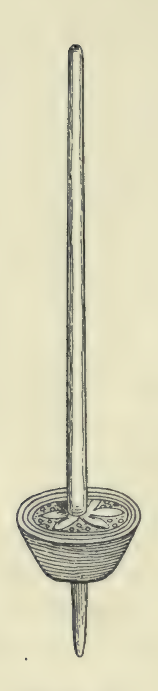


PLATE VIII.

FIG. 1.—AN ANCIENT SPINDLE: SHOWING THE FORM OF THE WHORL.

The metal hook at the top, by which the wool was drawn from the distaff, is lost.



PLATE VIII.

FIG. 2.—UPPER SURFACE OF THE WHORL ATTACHED TO THE SPINDLE OF NECESSITY.

The small disc in the centre represents a section of the shaft, which is driven through the innermost circle. The order of the several rims in point of breadth is shown by the numerals, 1, 2, 3, etc. The capitals, A B, C, etc., mark the relative swiftness of the retrograde movements, or, in other words, the periods in which the "Planets," including sun and moon, accomplish their several revolutions, as distinct from the diurnal revolution in which all participate.

[*To go between pages* 154-5.



by a counter or retrograde movement from right to left, which carries the moon round in a month, the sun in a year, and the remainder with varying velocity, as specified in the diagram. Mercury and Venus here simply accompany the sun. The eccentric variations in their movements referred to in the *Timæus* are ignored, perhaps as interfering with simplicity and symmetry. The colours are of course as generally perceived. Venus is less white than Jupiter, because her nearness to the sunrise or sunset affects her with a corresponding tinge. The shaft and hook of the spindle, which connect it with the outer heaven, are of pure adamant or steel; the whorl of adamant alloyed with other metals, because nothing that is corporeal can be absolutely pure. The Fates, who control the heavenly motions, are also concerned with the human destinies of the souls who are now gathered round the vision. Lachesis, the power of the past upon the future, a sort of Karma, gives the word for the lottery and choice of lives. Her minister throws down the lots and scatters the specimens of life-careers, and then utters the warning of the goddess, daughter of Necessity. It is at this point that the doctrine of Free-will comes in.

"You are to choose," says the exponent of Lachesis, "the genius which is to be your destiny.

There is no monopoly of virtue, but as a man honours or dishonours her in making his choice, he will have more or less of her; the responsibility is with the chooser,—God is justified." So in *Timæus*, 42 D., the Creator gives laws to His creatures, that He may be guiltless of future evil in any of them, and instructs the younger gods so to pilot the mortal animal as to avert from it all but self-inflicted harms. Compare also *Laws*, X., 904, where God is described as placing living beings in a state of probation, and making their future character to depend on virtue and vice, of which one or the other is to be chosen in an instant. The allegory is not to be too closely pressed: for while it is said that the life-career selected before birth determines character, this is followed by the exhortation to study philosophy, so that everywhere, both here and hereafter, a man may choose the best life with reference to its moral effect. In the *Phædrus*, likewise, the decree of predestination (Θεσμὸς Ἀδραστείας) contains the provision that the soul before being re-embodied shall be free to choose her life career. As Nettleship has well expressed it, "Circumstance, the fact of choice, and the irrevocableness of choice, are the three great elements in life." It is needless to recapitulate the graphic scene which follows, "at once sad, and laughable, and strange," or to dwell

at any length on the links which bind the impressive conclusion to the previous discourse—such as the association of irredeemable wickedness with tyranny.

Lachesis, the goddess of the lot, directs each individual soul to be led by the genius of her destiny beneath the hand of Clotho, who spins the thread accordingly, and then to the work of Atropos, who makes firm and irreversible what has been spun. Then one by one they pass beneath the throne of Necessity. That is a solemn moment. The Fates who guide and regulate the cosmic motions, and the same supreme, inevitable Law, have thus to do also with individual destinies. The souls are then conducted through fierce heat, which aggravates their thirst, to the barren plain and fleeting river of forgetfulness. Here again there is some room for choice, for the wiser spirits drink less in spite of the thirst, and are less completely steeped in oblivion. At midnight, amidst thunder and earthquake, they are launched to their several births "like shooting stars."

There is not space to consider the influence of this great myth on subsequent literature and belief; for it is time to conclude with a few general remarks on the relation of Plato's *Republic* to modern life and thought. It is enough to

observe that Plato, in finishing this great work, returns, as in a piece of music, to the leading motive of the Moral Ideal.

REFERENCES, CHAPTER X.

p. 141. (1) *Republic*, Book II., p. 382 D.
(2) *Republic*, Book VI., pp. 506 E ff.
(3) *Phædo*, pp. 61 E, 114 D.
(4) *Phædrus*, pp. 246 ff., 265 C; *Gorgias*, p. 523 A.

p. 142. Bacon, *Novum Organum*, I., Aph. 38-44; *Timæus*, pp. 41 ff.; *Phædo*, III., A-C; *cf.* Dante, *Inferno*, Canto IX., ll. 82-3—

> Dal volto rimovea quell' aer grasso,
> Menando la sinistra inanzi spesso.

p. 144. *Cf. Republic*, Book III., p. 402 B, εἰκόνας γραμμάτων κ.τ.λ.

p. 146. (1) On the music of the spheres, see *Nettleship*, p. 363.
(2) *Republic*, VII., p. 515 B.

p. 147. (1) See James Darmesteter's commentary on his translation of the Zend-Avesta into French.

p. 148. (1) *Republic*, Book VIII., p. 546.
(2) *Nettleship*, p. 302.
(3) *Republic*, Book IX., p. 587 C-E.

p. 149. On the Platonic number, see J. Adam; and read notes to the *Republic* in Clarendon Press Edition, vol. iii., pp. 364-373. And for the details of the following myth, read carefully the notes to the Clarendon Press Edition of the *Republic*, vol. iii., pp. 472-484—after first correcting an *erratum* on p. 172, line 12 from bottom, by transposing the words "Venus," "Mercury," thus:—

"Mercury,"[5] "Venus."[6]

p. 150. παμφύλιος, from πᾶς and φυλή.

CHAPTER XI

PLATO AND MODERN LIFE

"We hope to be going on by steps, not by bounds. We must keep our eyes on the stars, but we must also remember that our feet are on the ground."

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT.

PLATO'S direct influence on after ages has been less than might be inferred from the frequent mention of his name. His light, as reflected in the Neo-Platonists and the Greek fathers, in Scotus Erigena, or in the Florentine Academy, was blurred and indistinct, and few of those who have worshipped him as the father of idealism have taken the trouble to master his philosophical meaning and intention. Dante did not know him at first hand, and Milton in his younger days could speak of "the spirit of Plato" and of Hermes Trismegistus in the same breath. The Cambridge Platonists gave almost equal attention to Plato, Proclus, and Plotinus.

In spite of the hackneyed saying of Coleridge,

"Every man is born a Platonist or an Aristotelian," it may be truly affirmed that the writings of Aristotle, in which floating conceptions adopted from his teacher were crystallized and stamped with logic, have indirectly conveyed to posterity more of the results of Plato's lifelong intellectual labour, than many so-called Platonists have derived from the Platonic Dialogues themselves. But there is still much to be gained in going back from the pupil to the master, and watching the metal in its fusile state, ere it has been cast into the mould of system. The form of Dialogue, holding much in solution that requires some mental affinity to draw it forth, has been adverse to any wide or general acceptance of the great Athenian's thoughts.

Another cause of vagueness has been the confusion, so long inevitable, between the earlier, middle, and late periods of a speculative effort whose evolution was the work of fifty years. To understand Plato aright, the different moods of his ever-moving mind must be first of all distinguished and then taken into a single view. For example, were the *Republic* all, the estimate of Joubert, quoted by Matthew Arnold in the *Essays in Criticism* (1st series, p. 294), would be nearly justified:—"Plato shows us nothing, but he brings his brightness with him: he puts light

into our eyes, and fills us with a clearness by which all objects afterwards become illuminated. He teaches us nothing, but he prepares us, fashions us, and makes us ready to know all. Somehow or other, the habit of reading him augments in us the capacity for discerning and entertaining whatever fine truths may afterwards present themselves. Like mountain air, it sharpens our organs, and gives us an appetite for wholesome food." . . . "It is good to breathe his air, but not to live upon him." But this criticism loses something of its edge when the ideal optimism of the *Republic* is supplemented by the practical moderation of the *Laws;* where the aim is lowered to what has been well called "meliorism," and "old experience doth attain to something of prophetic strain." To pass from the former to the latter Dialogue is like an appeal to "Philip sober." Let me quote one or two sentences:—

"The difficulty is to find the divine love of temperate and just institutions existing in any powerful forms of government, whether in a monarchy or oligarchy of wealth or of birth. You might as well hope to reproduce the character of Nestor, who is said to have excelled all men in the power of speech, and yet more in his temperance. This, however, according to the tradition, was in the times of Troy; in our

own days there is nothing of the sort; but if such an one either has or ever shall come into being, or is now among us, blessed is he, and blessed are they who hear the wise words that flow from his lips. And this may be said of power in general. When the supreme power in man coincides with the greatest wisdom and temperance, then the best laws and the best constitution come into being; but in no other way" (*Laws*, Book IV., p. 711). "Masters and freemen in states are very likely to arrive at a true conviction that without due regulation of private life in cities, stability in the laying down of laws is hardly to be expected; and he who makes this reflection may himself adopt the laws now mentioned, and, adopting them, may order his house and state well and happily" (*ibid.*, Book VII., p. 790).

If Plato "is in the air and on firm ground in successive instants" (Jowett), this truth is still more apparent when different periods of his activity are compared. The same spirit is recognisable, but in the later writings the wildness, the paradoxical attitude, the audacity of sanguine hope, have passed away.

Yet to the last it was impossible for Plato or any of the old Greek thinkers to anticipate the complexity of the modern world, or the gradual

progress by which freedom and orderliness are being developed, in what to them would have seemed a seething chaos of incongruous atoms, in the course of many generations. As Professor Jowett observes, "The regular growth of a state enlightened by experience, progressing in knowledge, improving in the arts, of which the citizens were educated by the fulfilment of political duties, appears never to have come within the range of their hopes and aspirations. . . . Progress has been the exception rather than the law of human history. The idea of progress is of modern rather than ancient date, and like the idea of the philosophy of history, is not more than a century or two old."

That which modern experience supplies as the counter-active or corrective of Utopian schemes is not blind faith in the wisdom of the many, but the conviction that true ideas emerging in original minds and enforced with disinterested energy must soon or late be universally acknowledged, so as to leaven the thoughts and mould the conduct of collective humanity. Men will follow a wise leader whom they instinctively trust and know to be wise. There are germs of such a belief even in the *Republic*. "Could the populace see the philosopher as he is, they would certainly accept him for their guide."

How far Plato himself was from wishing to inaugurate a violent revolution amongst his own countrymen, appears from the *Crito*, which gives the philosopher's answer to the question of Niebuhr, "Was Plato a good citizen?" He recognises the danger "of unsettling men's minds by sudden changes, or by destroying the sacredness of one set of ideas when there is nothing else to take their place". (Jowett).

But when once launched on a course of political speculation he will not stop short until he has given formal completeness to his ideal of human society, or rather of an Hellenic state. To this effect his philosophical determination was re-enforced by his literary instinct. The Greek world was so disorganized as to cry aloud for one great change. When that had been accomplished, a new set of traditions was to be substituted for the old, and stereotyped for all the time to come. The change for the better, if accomplished at all, was to be the work of some new Solon or Lycurgus, who should start the Commonwealth afresh on philosophic lines, to proceed thenceforward with increasing smoothness and velocity.

But while the Greek idea of progress was thus rudimentary, there is no stimulus to progress comparable to the Hellenic spirit, which in Plato attains

the zenith of its power. His works are an unfailing antidote to dead traditions and stale conventions. Plato's faith in the supremacy of reason, his lofty conception of the true destiny of the human soul, will continue to animate the endeavours of all lovers of their race long after they have learned from experience—such as that of the "moderates" in the French Revolution, who would have transplanted the English constitution bodily—to distrust ready-made reforms, and to "keep their feet on the ground while looking at the stars." Notwithstanding the great gulf which separates the Greek city from the modern nation, European or American statesmen and moralists may yet derive some wisdom from the study of him.

The union of wisdom and beneficence with power, which is the vital principle of Plato's political creed, has been the dream of all in every age who have reflected at all deeply on the lives of their fellow-men. Æschylus saw this in vision when he composed the Promethean trilogy; although his suffering Titan failed to realize the force of his own words as applicable to struggling humanity:—

> "Not so: not yet: all-consummating Fate
> Decrees this otherwise. Through countless shocks
> And agonies I win to Freedom's goal."

And what other thought was in the mind of the

British statesman, who said, when it seemed to him that a Conservative government had "shot Niagara": "We must educate our masters"?

In conclusion, I propose to dwell briefly on a few out of many isolated points in which principles of the *Republic* may be usefully suggestive at the present day:—

1. The paradox of Book I., that justice is for another's good, and yet to be just is to be happy, touches on a confusion of thought that is still prevalent in the modern world. The Utilitarian theory, in identifying pleasure and happiness, has left an impression on some minds that Reason is limited by Self-love, and that actions other than self-regarding are "ultra-rational." Sir Galahad's saying, on hearing of Siege Perilous, "If I lose myself I gain myself," would in that case be simply nonsensical. But it is matter of experience that by every disinterested act the individual personality is enriched and enlarged. It is by going forth from self without any thought of self that the true self is raised to higher powers, and man becomes more and more himself. It is a pinched and jejune conception of reason that fails to include such action under the category of rational.

We have seen that in Plato's conception of the philosopher, reason, will, and emotion are virtually combined. The vision of the Good has vindicated

the soul's inheritance, and has revealed her native affinity to truth and right. And if the aim of righteous conduct be no higher than the greatest happiness of the greatest number, it is hard to say whether in the consequent endeavour, intellect, feeling, or volition is supreme. To call in aid a mystical religious motive separate from all these is only to say that in our best moments the three factors of spiritual life are fused in one.

2. Owing to his neglect of the industrial classes, Plato seems to forget the starting-point in his formation of the state as the idealizing process is continued. The consciousness of *want* is overborne in the guardians generally by the spirit of patriotism, and in the rulers by the contemplation of all existence in the light of the good. But amongst those who in the community correspond to the animal nature in the individual, the originating cause of social union must be conceived as still operating, though under the severest regulation from above. Humanity cannot be imagined without it. A late metaphysician, Professor Ferrier of St Andrews, once said of Hunger as a primary motive, "There he sits weaving the diverse threads into the web of social life." When this crude principle has been developed, as in modern communities, into commercial greed, and internecine competition threatens to overcome morality,

it is plain enough what Plato would have thought, though how he would propose to obviate the mischief we cannot know. He would certainly have foreseen a danger in the substitution of an oligarchy of wealth for an aristocracy of birth. Nor would the accumulation of vast fortunes have appeared to him a worthy use to make of intellectual power.

3. But there is another aspect of his social scheme in which the obscuration or extenuation of the perpetual life-struggle involves a possible danger. Plato has based the earlier education on perfect circumstances tempered with culture. The young are to be sedulously guarded from all knowledge of evil. From everything they hear, from every object on which their eyes may rest, they are to drink in principles of beauty, honour, and truth:—not truth of fact, but truth of idea. (For Plato agrees with Joubert, that Fiction has no right to exist, unless it is more beautiful than reality.)

What educational conditions are the most favourable for the formation of character? "Plato does not seem to consider that some degree of freedom, 'a little wholesome neglect,' is necessary to strengthen and develope the character, and to give play to the individual nature" (Jowett). The question thus raised is too large to be considered here, but it may suggest another, which is

not less grave. How far is the elevation of the standard of comfort, on which in modern politics so much stress is laid, to be trusted as a means for improving the morals of mankind? Is it not possible that, unless corroborated by forces of a more spiritual nature, the greater easefulness of our environment may sap the springs of energy and tend gradually to the extinction of spontaneous effort? It is a matter of degree; but one manifest inference from the mere mention of it, is the responsibility which rests upon the leisured classes —not only to dabble in philanthropy, but to set before themselves high moral aims, and by example, by sympathy, by emphasizing the seriousness of life, to counteract the inertia, the false excitement, the frivolous distractions, which are the cankers of contemporary civilization.

4. The leading notes of Plato's commonwealth are simplicity and unity; characteristics hard to impress upon modern societies. Yet his pattern, although drawn in outline, may not be useless to those who would strike the balance between centralization and local authority, or who feel the difficulty of reconciling patriotism with government by party. Mr Matthew Arnold, in days when an untempered individualism prevailed, used to hold before his countrymen the idea of the State. Readers of *Friendship's Garland*, or of

Culture and Anarchy, may find analogies between his point of view and Plato's. The friction which is inevitable in democratic governments recalls a hint of Plato's in Book VIII. (p. 564), "see how sensitive the citizens become; they chafe impatiently at the least touch of authority." In the earlier days of Athenian democracy, Pericles had so much influence with his fellow-citizens that he could speak words to anger them. Is it the "sensitiveness" of the people, or the want of moral courage in the statesman, that has made possible such disastrous measures as the permissive clauses in the recent Vaccination Act?

5. Plato's theory of education as the development of latent powers, has often been revived in modern treatises. Jowett, however, observes, "he does not see that education is relative to the characters of individuals." This may be true of the *Republic*, where the strict unity of the State requires that the guardians should be cast in one mould. But the remark does not apply to the classical passage of the *Phædrus*, which might have satisfied even the author of *Wilhelm Meister*:—"The orator (or teacher) must learn the differences of souls—they are so many and of such a nature, and from them come the differences between man and man . . . such and such persons are affected by this or that kind of speech in this or that way. . .

When he knows the times and seasons of all these things, then, and not till then, he is a perfect master of his art."

How far it is desirable that all the members of a state or nation should be educated in common, how soon or to what extent specialization should be admitted, is a problem which is only now in course of gradual solution. A particular case of it, and a most important one, occurs in connection with Plato's theory of government. The philosopher is brought back into the den out of the ampler ether which he has been breathing in the upper world. And this requirement is vindicated as follows:—"You must contrive for your future rulers another and a better life than that of a ruler, and then you may have a well-ordered state: for only in the state which offers this, will they rule who are truly rich, not in silver and gold, but in virtue and wisdom, which are the true blessings of life."

We are sometimes laughed at in Great Britain because our statesmen, our judges, and our professional men have carried their general education further into life than is usual in other lands. But experience has proved that the greatest amount of liberal culture that is compatible with the acquisition of professional knowledge and skill is not only no hindrance but a most valuable furtherance towards the highest practical success. The labours

of one so trained, like the delights of Antony,

> "Are dolphin-like, they show his back above
> The element they live in."

Not only is the whole community thus better harmonized, but the individual members are approximately more complete. Those monstrosities, as Plato would call them (ἀλλόκοτοί τινες), the bookworm, the faddist, and the doctrinaire, are less in evidence, and such lame or one-sided products as the mere student or the half-professional athlete, are discredited. Officials are less in danger of sinking into a groove, and those employed in "limited professions" are in some measure prepared to recognise the value of pursuits of larger scope. I read the other day, "Carlyle had not been a workman":—Carlyle, whose title to remembrance is largely due to his indefatigable industry! The phrase in which Plato sums up his twofold plan of education, "reason blended with culture" (λόγος μουσικῇ κεκραμένος), expresses the aim which all teachers should have in view, and only needs that technical or practical training should be superadded.

6. Two minor principles of education on which the author of the *Republic* insists are worth repeating here,—that subjects should be classified and graduated according to the pupil's ages, and that the earliest lessons should be accompanied with enjoy-

ment. Have not both these rules been violated by our public school system,—promoting cram and gerund-grinding between eight and twelve, and depriving the more arduous studies of the fresh interest that might else attend them, if commenced when the mind has been prepared to profit by them?

In treating of the Sciences of Astronomy and Harmony, Plato disparages observation in comparison with mathematical demonstration. He is far from recognising that true theory is only fact explained. Yet he was in advance of his contemporaries, including the Pythagoreans, in anticipating the important part which mathematics would have to play in ascertaining the laws of matter in motion.

7. The celestial revolutions were for Plato the type of obedience to eternal law. His thought might be expressed in words used in another connection by the prophet Joel: "They shall not break their ranks, neither shall one thrust another, they shall walk every one in his path." The progress of science has given a different meaning to the cosmic process. The stars are now "cold fires, yet with power to burn and brand his nothingness into man." Life, according to natural law, is the struggle for existence, resulting not in moral nobleness but in brutal strength. The Darwinian

tendency to belittle human history in comparison with the times preceding man, and to assume natural selection as the condition of human progress, has been combated by Darwin's great disciple and champion, the late Professor Huxley, in his Romanes lecture entitled "*Evolution and Ethics.*" He argues with great force that human progress has consisted and must always consist in resolute and persevering opposition to the cosmic process, *i.e.*, to "the coarse struggle for existence of the state of nature." He acknowledges that man is in a sense the product of the very process which he thus opposes, and he would of course admit that,

> "Nature is made better by no mean,
> But nature makes that mean";

or, as Bacon put it, that she is conquered by obeying her; nor does he deny that amongst lower animals also there are tendencies to social union. But he is not, like some evolutionists, a slave to language, and he makes liberal use of the word "ideal." Imagining a new colony planted in a savage country, he says:—"Our administrator would select his human agents with a view to his ideal of a successful colony, just as the gardener selects his plants with a view to his ideal of useful or beautiful products. . . . In order to attain his ends, he would have to avail himself of the

courage, industry, and co-operative intelligence of the settlers; and it is plain that the interest of the community would be best served by increasing the proportion of persons who possess such qualities, and diminishing that of persons devoid of them. In other words, by selection directed towards an ideal.

"Thus the administrator might look to the establishment of an earthly paradise, a true garden of Eden, in which all things should work together towards the well-being of the gardeners . . . where men themselves should have been selected with a view to their efficiency as organs for the performance of the functions of a perfected society. And this ideal polity would have been brought about, not by gradually adjusting the men to the conditions around them, but by creating artificial conditions for them; not by allowing the free play of the struggle for existence, but by excluding that struggle, and by substituting selection directed towards the administrator's ideal for the selection it exercises."

The serpent in this Eden is again the "cosmic process," reappearing in the form of competition, not merely for the commodities, but for the means of existence.

"That which lies before the human race is a constant struggle to maintain and improve, in

opposition to the state of Nature, the state of Art, of an organized polity; in which, and by which, man may develop a worthy civilization, capable of maintaining and constantly improving itself."

Thus, in the view of the most distinguished advocate of modern scientific method, while the relation of man to the cosmos is differently conceived, the moral ideal remains, and is set forth in a manner of which Plato might have approved. Meanwhile the grandiose image in *Republic*, Book X., where the souls after their choice of lives are led by their destinies beneath the throne of Necessity, has lost little of its essential significance.

I will end with one more quotation, and it shall be taken from a writer who is recognised by many persons as an exponent of the modern spirit:—Maurice Maeterlinck, in writing about Hamlet, says "Lofty thoughts suffice not always to overcome destiny, for against these destiny can oppose thoughts that are loftier still; but what destiny has ever withstood thoughts that are simple and good, thoughts that are tender and loyal? We can triumph over Destiny only by doing the very reverse of the evil she fain would have us commit. For no tragedy can be inevitable."

REFERENCES, CHAPTER XI.

p. 159. "Dante did not know him," unless through a Latin translation of the *Timæus*. See Toynbee's *Dante Dictionary*, *s.v.* "Platone."

p. 160. (1) See A. W. Benn on *The Later Ontology of Plato;* in MIND, vol. xi., N.S., No. 41.
(2) *Essays in Criticism*, 1st series, p. 294.

p. 163. Jowett's Introduction to *Republic*, pp. ccxii., ccxiii.

p. 165. *Æsch. Prom.*, V., pp. 511-513.

p. 168. Jowett's Introduction to *Republic*, p. ccix.

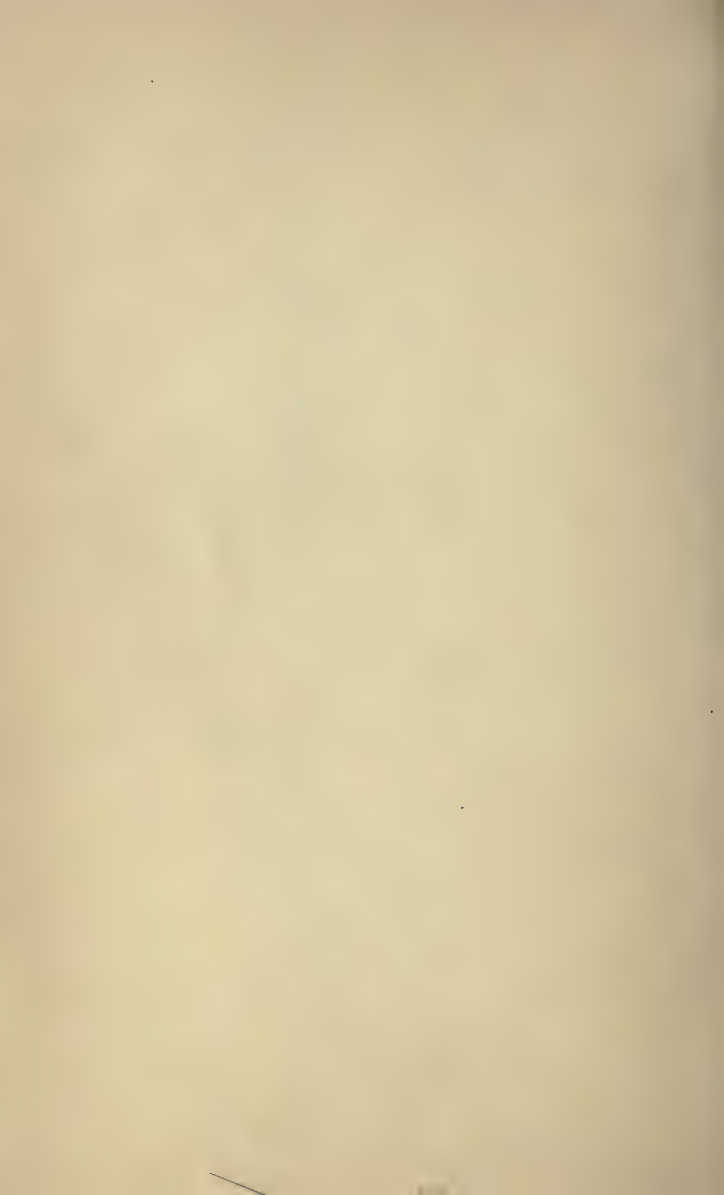
p. 169. See also *Mixed Essays*. "The nation may acquire in the State an ideal of high reason and right feeling, representing its best self, commanding general respect, and forming a rallying point for the intelligence and for the worthiest instincts of the community, which will herein find a true bond of union."

p. 170. (1) Jowett's Introduction to *Republic*, p. ccviii.
(2) *Phædrus*, p. 271 D.

p. 171. (1) *Republic*, VII., p. 521 A.
(2) *Republic*, VI., p. 487 D.

p. 174. (1) *Collected Essays*, by T. H. Huxley, vol. ix., 1894.
(2) Prolegomena to Romanes Lecture, *ibid.*, pp. 18-20.

p. 175. *Ibid.*, p. 44.



INDEX

Printed by Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh.

THE FACE OF NATURE: Popular Readings in Elementary Science. By the Rev. C. T. OVENDEN, D.D., Canon of St Patrick's, Rector of Enniskillen. With numerous Diagrams. Fcap 8vo. 2s. [*Ready*

INTRODUCTION TO POETRY (Poetic Expression, Poetic Truth, The Progress of Poetry). By LAURIE MAGNUS, M.A.

Designed to convey the elements of taste and judgment in poetry by the natural or direct method of literature teaching. [*Ready*

A FIRST COURSE OF CHEMISTRY. By J. H. LEONARD. [*Ready*

IN THE PRESS

HEROES OF THE WEST: A Biographical Sketch of Modern History. By the Rev. A. J. and Mrs CARLYLE and F. S. MARVIN, M.A. Two Vols.

ELECTRIC WIRING. By W. C. CLINTON, B.Sc. (Lond.), Demonstrator in the Pender Laboratory, University College, London.

This volume is written with particular reference to the requirements of the examinations of the City and Guilds of London Institute.

IN ACTIVE PREPARATION

OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF COMMERCE. By C. S. FEARENSIDE, M.A. Cantab., Author of *The Tutorial History of England.*

TELEGRAPHS AND TELEPHONES. By Sir W. H. PREECE, K.C.B., Past President of the Institute of Civil Engineers.

MUSIC. By A. KALISCH, B.A.

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY. By S. RAPPOPORT, Ph.D.

THE CALCULUS FOR ARTISANS. By Prof. O. HENRICI, F.R.S., etc.

TENNYSON'S "ŒNONE." By LAURIE MAGNUS, M.A.

COMMERCIAL GERMAN. In Two Parts. By GUSTAV HEIN, University of Berlin, and Lecturer in German (Honours) to the University of Aberdeen, and MICHAEL BECKER, Professor of Modern Languages in the Ecole Alsacienne, Paris. Part I., with a Map. [*In the Press*

This manual is uniform with the first part of *Commercial French* by Poole and Becker, and is specially adapted for the use of students in commercial classes and continuation schools.

FRENCH COMMERCIAL CORRESPONDENCE. By Professor CHARLES GLAUSER and W. MANSFIELD POOLE, M.A., Magdalen College, Oxford, Secretary to the Modern Language Association, and formerly Assistant-Master at Merchant Taylors' School. Crown 8vo. [*In the Press*

INTERMEDIATE FRENCH ACCIDENCE AND OUTLINES OF SYNTAX, with Historical Notes. By G. H. CLARKE, M.A., of Hymers College, Hull, and L. R. TANQUEREY, B.ès.L. [*In the Press*

ARITHMETIC MADE EASY. Lectures on Method, with Illustrations, for Teachers and Pupils. By MABEL A. MARSH. [*In the Press*

THE SOIL. By A. D. HALL, M.A., Principal of the South-Eastern Agricultural College.

This volume, by the Principal of the County Council College at Wye, is the first of a group of text-books intended for the use of students in Agriculture. Other volumes, which will be duly announced, will deal with "Plant Physiology," "Manures," etc. [*In active preparation*

Other Volumes to follow

New Testament Teachings for Secondary Schools

THE SUNRISE OF REVELATION. A Sequel to *The Dawn of Revelation*. By Miss M. BRAMSTON, Author of *The Dawn of Revelation*, *Judea and her Rulers*, *etc.* Crown 8vo. 5s. net.

"We do not know of any book likely to be more useful to the teachers of secondary schools in the preparation of their Scripture lessons than this. It is clear, accurate, and full of instruction and suggestiveness." — *The Guardian.*





